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American Cavalcade

A MEMOIR
ON THE LIFE AND FAMILY OF
DEWITT CLINTON POOLE

By

JOHN HUDSON POOLE

B.S. United States Military Academy, 1901
Colonel of Engineers, National Army, 1918-1919

PASADENA

1939

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American Cavalcade by
Col. John Hudson Parle.

Corrections by Charles Mearns
Page 11. - Joseph Smith translated
the Book of Mormon near
Palmyra, New York, not
in Vermont.

Page 75. - The Martineaus
were of a family that came
out of Holland to Staten
Island, where the family
name was spelled Martino,
indicating Italian origin,
very probably Waldensian.
John and Peter Martino were
baptized in the Moravian
Church at New Dorp, S.I.
according to published records
the maiden name of their mother
was Eleanor Haughwort.

Recd Feb 28-1979

6
directions by Charles Mearns Kurtz
v 219: Cornwallis surrendered
Yorktown in 1781 not 1782

76: — between Cohoes and
Watertown should read

between Cohoes and Watervliet "

town is located near Lake Ontario
whence near the Erie Canal
Hudson River

W Kurtz

129 Nova Drive
Piedmont, Calif

Madison Miss., Nov. 11, 1940

AMERICAN CAVALCADE



THE AMERICAN CAVALCADE



De Witt Clinton Poole

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JOHN HUDSON POOLE

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There may be, and indeed there often is, a regard for ancestry which nourishes only a weak pride; as there is also a care for posterity which only disguises an habitual avarice. But there is also a moral and philosophical respect for our ancestors which elevates the character and improves the heart.

DANIEL WEBSTER

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PREFACE

DEWITT CLINTON POOLE was born September 28, 1828, in the Mohawk Valley of New York State and died, in his ninetieth year, at his home in Madison, Wisconsin, November 30, 1917. The one hundred years following his birth were remarkable years in the westward settlement and development of our country, and in almost unbelievable progress in the attainment of scientific knowledge and its application to the needs and capabilities of human life. During nine-tenths of this century of pioneering, of invention, and of progress, covering all but forty-five years of our country's history from the close of the Revolutionary War down to and including the World War, he lived his part and left his mark.

Born in what now seems another age, although his subsequent life led him throughout the length and breadth of the land and over the seven seas, his boyhood days were spent in the simple yet ample life of rural New York State a century ago.

On his grandfather's farm at Oriskany, where at the age of seven he went to live after his father's death, he scampered over the frosty fields for the cows, did the

chores, attended the little one-room country school-house, and led the life of a country boy. It was a frugal life that was lived by his grandparents, but they were blessed with an abundance of food and simple clothing. They grew their own wheat and corn, most of which was ground into flour and meal at a neighboring mill for a share of the grain, and they raised all the meat and vegetables that were required. Wool from their own sheep they carded and spun and wove into cloth for their winter clothing; they dipped their own candles, and these afforded sufficient artificial light for a routine of daily life that began with the daylight and ended soon after dark. Milk and eggs from the barnyard and firewood from the forest or their own wood lot completed everything that was needed from the physical world except money. Of this they required very little, the chief need for it being to pay the small land taxes each year.

These were the conditions of home life under which DeWitt Clinton Poole, who lived to see America enter the World War, spent the years of his boyhood. There were no railroads, there was no telegraph, there were no telephones; and if anyone with a gift of prophetic vision had attempted to foretell the automobile, the airplane, and the radio, he would have been laughed out of town; yet these wonders, and many others, too, came into practical, everyday use during his span of life.

In this memoir I have attempted to portray my father

and the members of his family as typical Americans, living the lives of their times. For some years data have been gathered to form the factual basis of this biography. Original sources in New England and New York have been visited and searched; a genealogy, as complete and accurate as possible, of the eight American families represented by the grandparents of DeWitt Clinton Poole and of his wife Maria Woodward Pettes, has been made, and this has taken some ten years of research, analysis, and compilation. To Miss Winifred Lovering Holman, of Boston, I acknowledge my appreciation of her efficient work in gathering and organizing this material. To the authors whose works I have freely consulted, and to many members and friends of the family, who have contributed association items and interesting details, I am indebted, and to them I extend my thanks.

But pure genealogy makes dull reading, and isolated family incidents do not hang together, so I have endeavored to hold the interest of my reader by weaving on this web of facts a fabric of historical narrative. Contemporary events and characters, in our country and in the world at large, have been used as transverse threads in the weaving, and a motif of the American Indian has been spread as a colorful and appropriate design over the warp and woof of fact and fancy.

Pasadena, California

J. H. P.

1939

PROLOGUE

I

THE streets of Albany were lined with banners that day in honor of the first flotilla to come down the Erie Canal. It was the second of November, 1825, and for a whole week the boats had been on their way from Buffalo, led by the "Seneca Chief" bearing the official party of commissioners and engineers. Aboard as a guest was Governor DeWitt Clinton, father of the project, whose dream of an inland waterway had come to fruition.

Seven days had passed since the "grand opening," when cannon, placed at repeating distances from Buffalo to New York City, had thundered their message through the Mohawk Valley announcing that "Clinton's Folly" was at last completed. As the "Seneca Chief" was drawn into the canal from Lake Erie by four gaily caparisoned horses, the first cannon was fired at Buffalo, and one hour and twenty minutes later the last cannon of the chain boomed out its message at The Battery in lower Manhattan.

And now Albany's day of rejoicing had come. The city was thronged with people who had been arriving hourly for days in all sorts of vehicles—chaises, carriages,

and farm carts—from all the towns up the Mohawk and down the Hudson. Among them were 26-year-old John Hudson Poole, Jr., and Harriet, his girl bride of seventeen, who had driven over from Amsterdam, a small village thirty miles west of Albany, to be on hand for the celebration.

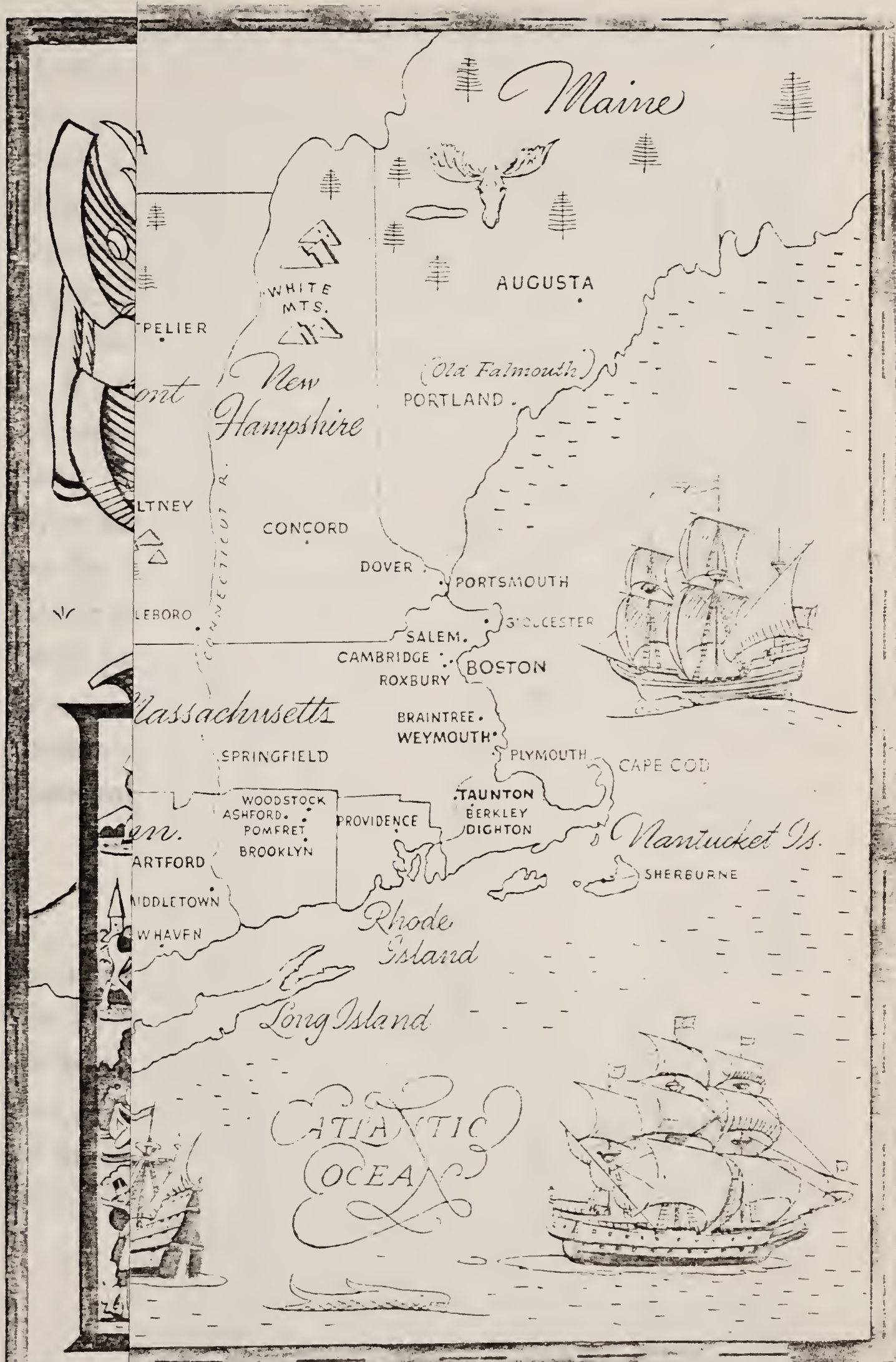
Young John Hudson Poole had not come solely to witness a pageant of historical importance. He and Harriet were there in sentiment for a day which they would remember as long as they lived — the day they first had met in the little Mohawk Valley town of Rome. He was now one of the junior engineers of the canal force, and Harriet's father, James Mears, had been one of the contractors who built part of the first section of the canal, from Rome to Utica. Harriet was immensely proud of both her husband and her father, and Hudson had something akin to adoration for the great Governor whom the state was honoring that day.

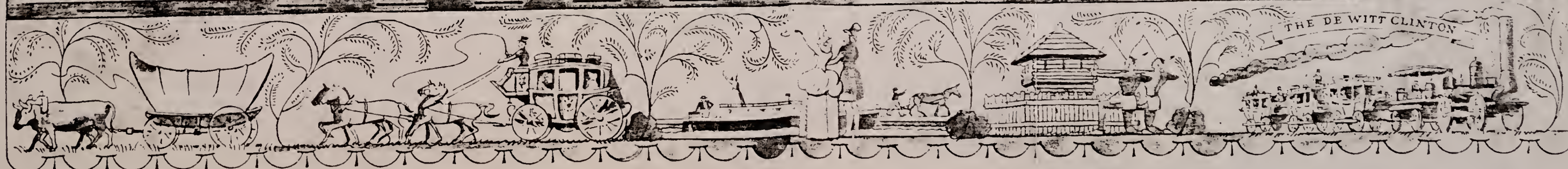
As the barges passed from the canal into the basin, all the wharves of the Albany river front were massed with cheering crowds. The youthful husband had found a vantage point from which he and Harriet could see the yawls captained by twenty-four master mariners who had volunteered to tow the barges from the canal into the Hudson River. While bands played and artillery on every pier roared a salute of welcome, the boats paraded the length of the basin and back again to South Bridge,

where the travelers disembarked for ceremonies at the state capitol.

Clinton was the cynosure of all eyes. Hudson hardly knew him as the man he had seen eight years before on that memorable Fourth of July in 1817, when Clinton broke the ground for the first section of the canal at Rome. The first citizen of New York had come with a large party from Albany to preside at the exercises that day, and a delegation from New York City had been brought up the Hudson on Robert Fulton's steamboat, the "Clermont," to join the Governor and to see him turn the first shovelful of earth. That had been Clinton's day of triumph, for he had labored incessantly for the construction of the canal since 1809, when he was appointed one of seven commissioners to examine and survey a route for a waterway from the Hudson to the Lakes. Despite the opposition of political enemies who had called him a "dreamer" obsessed by a "crazy, impractical scheme," Clinton had been elected governor in 1816, and early in the session of the legislature during the following year, largely by his magnetic personality and the force of his argument, had induced that body to pass a bill ordering construction of the canal.

No man had had a stormier career in politics than this quiet leader now receiving the plaudits of the multitude.





and on the forty-first anniversary of the Declaration of Independence all roads led to Rome for what was to be an epochal event in the history of the state. Looking back now as he stood there on the wharf at Albany, Hudson thought of the ceremony at Rome as something far away and long ago. Only eight years had passed, but eight years seem a long time to a young man only midway through his twenties.

It had been a full hour before dawn on that July day in 1817, he recalled, when he saddled his horse for the long, dusty ride from Oriskany to Rome. The green hills were never more beautiful than they were that morning as the sun came up to greet the lone rider cantering along the back roads of the valley. Life was bursting with joy and there was a song in his heart, for with young Hudson Poole that day there rode a great ambition. Still a student at Fairfield Academy and of a mechanical turn of mind, he wanted to be a civil engineer.

3

Rome was in festive mood that day in the long ago when the boy reached the place where the exercises were to be held. The Governor and his aides had not yet arrived, but James Mears was there attending to the last details of the arrangements for the ground-breaking ceremony. Someone pointed him out, and Hudson introduced him-

self. But Mears was too busy to hear the lad's recital of his plan to take up engineering. A little later, after the ground-breaking, there would be time for that. For the moment Mears would do the next best thing. He would introduce the boy to Mrs. Mears and their children, who had come over from Elbridge to see the beginning of what, to all New York State, was to be the greatest engineering feat in the world.

" . . . and this is my daughter Harriet," Mears was saying.

As the youth looked down into a pair of blue eyes, framed in a cluster of curls beneath a bonnet, he thought she was the most adorable creature he had ever seen. And now, eight years later, lovelier than ever, she was standing beside him.

The cheering of the crowd broke the spell of his romancing. A grand salute from twenty-four pieces of cannon was being fired. DeWitt Clinton, tall, dignified idol of the people, as erect as ever but with the lines more heavily etched on his face than they were eight years before, was coming across the gangplank.

Soon a procession was forming to escort the guests to Rockwell's Mansion House for an exchange of congratulations, after which they would proceed through the city's principal streets to the capitol for further exercises in the Assembly Chamber. Bands were playing as Hudson Poole and his bride, breaking away from the

surging, cheering crowd, turned into a side street and sought the quiet of an inn for refreshment.

By midafternoon there were lowering clouds, and a stiff wind from the northeast was whipping the sere and yellow leaves from the trees.

A chaise, drawn by the horse which a boy had once ridden from Oriskany to Rome, was going down a country road. It would be dark by the time Hudson and Harriet reached Amsterdam and the little house where they had gone to live after their wedding.

4

Nearly three years had passed. It was 1828, and early autumn had come again in Amsterdam. September's sun was coloring the hills, and the Mohawk Valley, resplendent with the hues of tinted foliage, was never more enchanting.

On September 28 the child was born, and Hudson and Harriet named him DeWitt Clinton Poole. Two years before, Clinton had been re-elected governor, after an interim of four years, and had died in office seven months before his namesake's birth.

The world, still living by candlelight, went on as usual. Andrew Jackson was in the midst of his second campaign for the presidency — a campaign marked by rancor unequalled since 1800, when Jefferson defeated

John Adams for a second term. And now John Quincy Adams was trying, unsuccessfully as it turned out, to defeat the "Jacobinical rabble," as his father had tried to do. Hudson Poole was intensely interested in politics, for politics was the life of the times. Even his joy in hearing a baby boy's voice in the house did not keep him from following the campaign as it swung into the last month of bitter invectives from both sides.

Adams had not been popular with the politicians and the speculators who wanted the Government to parcel out all public lands in the West. He had looked to the long future and seen the public domain as a treasury of national resources that must be preserved for future generations. "The reign of King Mob seems triumphant," Mr. Justice Story of the Supreme Court asserted, and the smashing defeat of Adams in November sent a shudder through the conservative North. In four months Old Hickory, "the Tennessee brawler," would ride victoriously into Washington to take the oath as the nation's chief executive.

5

Outside the little world of Amsterdam, beyond the hills and over the seas, contemporary events were taking place that would shape the destiny of nations for a century to come. Only six years had passed since Prime Minister Canning had made British liberalism respected abroad;

and now Canning was dead and had been succeeded by his great rival, the Duke of Wellington.

For seven years European tension had been relaxed, ever since Napoleon had been lowered into a lonely grave at St. Helena. In 1828 it seemed but yesterday that Byron, Trelawny, and Leigh Hunt had stood beside Shelley's funeral pyre on the shore near Viareggio and had taken his ashes with them to Rome, for burial in the little Protestant cemetery.

Only four years had passed since Byron sailed to join the Greeks in their liberation war against the Turks, and to die of fever in the swamps of Missolonghi. In France, Lamartine was publishing his *Death of Socrates*, Thiers was giving the first volumes of his *History of the French Revolution* to the world, and Louis XVIII was being given a state funeral with the pomp and ceremony reserved for royalty.

Lafayette had returned to the United States as the guest of the nation which he had helped to found and in whose armies he had served as a major general. Only three years before DeWitt Clinton Poole was born, the famous Frenchman, who had lived in close intimacy with Washington during the darkest hours of the Revolution, laid the cornerstone of the monument on Bunker Hill. On that historic seventeenth of June, 1825, Daniel Webster made one of his greatest speeches.

A few months later, in England, George Stephenson,

inventor of the steam locomotive, was denounced in the House of Lords and a charter for a railroad was opposed on the ground that the "iron horse" would "poison the air, kill the birds as they flew over it, destroy the pheasants, burn up the farms and homesteads near the line, make travel on highways impossible, ruin country inns, and be the means of killing hundreds of passengers."

Two years before the birth of DeWitt Clinton Poole—on July 4, 1826, to be exact—Jefferson and John Adams had died, fifty years to the day after they signed the Declaration of Independence. Only eighteen months had passed since Beethoven died in Austria, and twenty thousand people had followed his coffin to the grave. A little more than a year had elapsed since William Blake, artist and mystic, whose *Songs of Innocence* and engravings were to survive his century, was buried in a pauper's grave in Bunhill Fields.

6

The "Tariff of Abominations" was still stirring up discord through the country in this year 1828; the issue of slavery was causing increasing dissension between the North and the South; and nearly two years would pass before Webster, in his reply to Hayne, would proclaim "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable." At Baltimore the first American railroad was being constructed; in his Connecticut home Noah

Webster was giving the finishing touches to his dictionary, the first edition of which was to be published this year; in Germany the appearance of Heinrich Heine's *Book of Songs* was being hailed and the young author praised as one of his country's lyric poets; in far-off Vienna Franz Schubert had only a month to live—insufficient time to complete a famous opus that was to be known as the *Unfinished Symphony*. Not many miles from Amsterdam, Fenimore Cooper, in this year 1828, had completed his romances *The Prairie* and *Red Rover*; while across the state line, in Vermont, Joseph Smith was translating the Book of Mormon from tablets which he claimed were revealed to him in a vision.

Great events were taking place at home and abroad when Hudson and Harriet named their baby DeWitt Clinton Poole, but there was no prophet in the land to tell of the things to come during his lifetime.

Chapter I

COLONIAL DAYS

I

OF THE history of the Poole family in England we know only the generalities that can be found about any English family of long standing. There are Pooles and Pools and Poles in many of the shires of southern England, and in feudal times in England there was a distinguished family descended from Richard de la Pole, who came to England from Normandy at the time of the Norman Conquest. De la Pole was probably the original Nornian French form of the name, but this fact does not in any definite way imply a direct line of descent from the enterprising knight, who came over with William the Conqueror, down to the present-day Pooles.

Up to the beginning of the fifteenth century most of the retainers, farmers, and servants on the great feudal estates of England had no surnames but went through life with such simple given names as John or Richard, with usually the addition of a further identifying phrase, giving such designations as John the smith, or Richard of the De la Poles. Toward the end of the fifteenth century many of these men of humble descent began to

adopt as their family names either these descriptive additions or the surname of the family for whom they fought or on whose estate they lived and worked. As time went on, the more successful of these descendants of the men-at-arms and serfs of the great families either acquired ownership of land or went to the nearest town as artisans. With this new status of citizenship, the former rustic "John the Smith" and "Richard of the De la Poles," became John Smith and Richard Poole. Many families in America today, and in fact in England, too, are using the crest and coat of arms of some feudal English family simply because they bear that family's name—little realizing that in all probability they are blood descendants of some sturdy old serf who lived in a little thatched cottage on the domain of the family whose armorial insignia they now display.

During the early part of the seventeenth century several men named Poole are on record as having come to America. The colonial records of Virginia show three families of that name, while the Massachusetts Bay settlements record the arrival in very early colonial times of four individuals of the name of Poole. Among this latter group was Edward Poole, from whom DeWitt Clinton Poole was a direct descendant. All came from the southern part of England, mostly from Devonshire and Somersetshire, but the records disclose no actual family relationship to have existed between them.

Edward Poole was born in or near Northleigh, Devonshire, England, in 1609, and came to America in 1635. Of his family and boyhood we know practically nothing, but we do know that when he had grown to young manhood Edward Poole joined a church company made up of men and women from the small towns of southern Devon and Somerset, and guided spiritually by Reverend Joseph Hull, a graduate of Oxford and the rector of Northleigh. This company was formed for the express purpose of emigrating to the New World under the leadership of Mr. Hull, to establish a settlement there, or to join one already established on the shores of Massachusetts Bay by Englishmen like themselves who were seeking both religious and political freedom in a new land.

When Edward Poole was born, England was just emerging from the Elizabethan age. The Virgin Queen had died six years before, and James I, who had recently ascended the throne, was already beginning those controversies with the British Parliament which were so vitally to influence English history for the next forty years, to bring on open conflict between Royalist and Roundhead, and to intensify the intolerance of the Church of England for those of the Puritan faith.

Only a score of years before Edward Poole's birth, the Invincible Armada had been defeated by the English

fleet off the coast of Cornwall, and England had been saved from Spanish domination. Edward Poole's own father could remember having heard the great news of the sea victory when he was a boy, and he probably remembered having seen the townfolk celebrate with bonfires in the little village of Northleigh as did the inhabitants of Plymouth, Exeter, Weymouth, and every other village and town of southern England.

Those were the days of Drake, of Hawkins, and of Frobisher, when English sailors, the most daring in the world, penetrated and fought on every sea. Then, too, a new land lying to the westward across the stormy Atlantic was at last being brought to popular attention. The Spanish had already made great conquests in the southern zones of this New World, and many secret diplomatic reports had reached the ministers of Queen Elizabeth, telling of Spanish conquests in Mexico and Peru, and of Spanish settlements in the wild country to the north of these old civilizations.

England claimed the whole northern portion of the New World by right of discovery, and in 1584 Queen Elizabeth granted to Sir Walter Raleigh a charter of colonization under which he sent out two ships to plant an English colony on the coast of Virginia, as he named the whole region from Chesapeake Bay southward to the Spanish settlements. This first English colony in America was a failure, and no lingering trace of it re-

mains today other than the world-wide love for the fragrant leaf, the use of which these English colonists learned from the Indians. Dried tobacco leaves were sent to England as one of the novelties from the new land, and it was then that Lady Nicotine began to cast her spell over the human race.

3

Only two years before Edward Poole's birth, the first permanent English settlement in America was made at Jamestown, and during the summer of the very year in which he was born, an English sea captain named Henry Hudson sailed into a promising opening in the American coast, thinking it might be a strait or passage through which he could take his ship to India. This little ship was named the "Halve Maene" by her owners, the Dutch East India Company, and as Hudson sailed her under the Dutch flag he came to be called Hendryk Hudson. Hudson did not find a northwest passage to India but he did discover for his employers and for the sovereignty of Holland a beautiful bay and a mighty river.

In the spring of 1620, when Edward Poole was eleven years old, a small company of nonconformist Englishmen, who, with their families, had been living for ten years in Leyden, Holland, to enjoy religious freedom, decided that inasmuch as they wanted their children to grow up to be Englishmen and not Dutchmen, they

would move their whole establishment, with their household goods and a few domestic animals, to the coast of America. They returned to England from Holland and immediately re-embarked from Plymouth for the New World.

The age of discovery was giving way to the age of colonization, and soon after the landing of these Pilgrim Fathers and the establishment of the settlement of New Plymouth, the English colonization of America became a definite movement, the second westward migration of part of the Anglo-Saxon race.

The years from 1620 to 1640 were troublous times in old England in matters both of state and church. Early in 1630, under circumstances of great excitement, Parliament was dissolved by Charles I, parliamentary leaders were sent to the Tower, and the period of royal rule without Parliament began. The heavy hand of an autocratic government and an intolerant Church of England fell on all those within reach who upheld the parliamentary party and the Puritan faith. In direct violation of royal command, hundreds of men and women were leaving England for the colonies at Jamestown and in New England.

In March, 1630, Governor John Winthrop, with a large company of eight hundred colonists, sailed from Cowes for Massachusetts Bay in four vessels, the "Arbella," the "Talbot," the "Ambrose," and the "Jewel."

The merchants of the English town of Boston in Lincolnshire had helped Winthrop, who came of an excellent English family, to raise the funds for his undertaking, and so we find him naming his principal settlement Boston. Other groups of Winthrop's company settled near by, where they established the towns of Charlestown, Braintree, and Dorchester. The Colony of Massachusetts Bay was formed of these settlements, with Boston as the home of Governor Winthrop and the seat of such colonial government as there was at that time.

4

The little company from Devonshire and Somersetshire, to which Edward Poole belonged, sailed for Massachusetts Bay from Weymouth, England, March 20, 1635, in the ship "Assurance," and arrived off Boston on the sixth of the following May. The original list of one hundred and four passengers of the ship, which carried this so-called Hull Company, is preserved in the New England historical records. The first twelve names on the list are those of the family of the leader, Reverend Joseph Hull, who brought with him his wife, his seven children, and three servants. Item 51 on the list interests us: "Edward Poole, aged 26 years, indentured to Samuel Allen."

The passenger list gives the age of each man, woman, and child on board, and one is impressed with the large

number of young children, even one- and two-year-old infants, who came over with their adventurous parents.

After their arrival in America, the members of the Hull Company evidently remained on their ship in Boston harbor for some weeks before arrangements could be made to land, for it was not until July 8, 1635, that the General Court in Boston issued an order giving permission to Reverend Joseph Hull, with twenty-one families, to settle twelve miles south of Boston. In September the settlement was incorporated as a town under the name of Weymouth.

5

Weymouth during the life of Edward Poole was a very simple seacoast settlement, and the life of the inhabitants was essentially a pioneer life, the greatest part of which was given to the providing of food and shelter. All the houses were at first made of logs, chinked with moss or mud and roofed with poles on which was placed a heavy thatch of marsh grass. The houses were all of one story, with a large room that served as kitchen and general living and sleeping quarters for the family. Each house had a large stone chimney with an open fireplace that served for cooking as well as for heating and lighting the room. The only other form of light was from tallow-dip candles which were used most sparingly. Most of the men turned to agriculture, but some took up fishing

and salt making, while others engaged in logging. Before long, the sawing of boards for use in Weymouth and for shipment to other towns along the bay became quite an industry.

Edward Poole remained in Weymouth all his life, and he is mentioned in many of the early town records as a landowner and as the operator of a sawmill. Seven years after his arrival in this country he was married to Sarah Pynney, a Devonshire girl who had recently come over to America with her brother from the same part of England in which Edward Poole had lived. She was the daughter of John Pynney, of Exeter, one of the principal towns of Devonshire, situated only a short distance from the village of Northleigh.

Edward Poole and his wife Sarah had seven children, all boys except one, little Sarah, who died when she was eight years old. The six boys were given biblical names, and it is through Isaac, the second son, that the family line continues. All of Edward Poole's children are mentioned in his will, which was made on June 22, 1664, during the illness preceding his death, and which still exists in the records of the old Plymouth County probate court.

Of Isaac Poole we have very meager information. He was born in Weymouth about 1645 and grew up and was married there when he was about twenty-three years old. The records refer to his wife as Elishama

Poole, but her maiden name is not disclosed. In 1678 he is mentioned in a list of residents of Weymouth who that year signed an oath of allegiance to the British sovereign Charles II. There are several deeds of record showing that he purchased and sold lands in Weymouth, but as to his occupation and the other incidents of his life we have no information other than that when he was an old man he moved with his son Joseph, the youngest of his seven children, to the Taunton River country in Massachusetts.

6

Counting Edward Poole as of the first generation of DeWitt Clinton Poole's branch of the family in America, Isaac Poole represents the second generation and his son Joseph Poole, the third. Inasmuch as Edward Poole's six sons raised good old-fashioned families, it is easy to see that by the third generation his descendants in America had reached a considerable number. They did not all remain in Weymouth, for several of them had already gone elsewhere, as had many of the enterprising spirits among the colonists of the other Massachusetts Bay settlements, who moved out north, west, and south, searching for favorable locations, buying land from the Indians, and laying the groundwork for permanent homes in newly organized communities.

Joseph Poole, the third in line, was born in Weymouth, May 25, 1680, and was married in Weymouth in March, 1706, to Mistress Experience White, a girl of nineteen whose father, Lieutenant Ebenezer White, had seen service during the late very serious Indian uprising known as King Philip's War. Soon after their marriage the Joseph Pooles moved from Weymouth, going about twenty-five or thirty miles to the southwest, where they established themselves in the southern part of a settlement known as Taunton.

This settlement was named after Taunton in Devonshire, England, and was located in Massachusetts not far from the Rhode Island line, on the Taunton River near the point where that river flows into an arm of Narragansett Bay. We know that the move was made between the years 1706 and 1708, because of the record of the marriage of Joseph Poole and Experience White in Weymouth on the former date, and because, on October 11, 1708, both Joseph Poole and his father signed a petition, along with other inhabitants of Taunton, South Purchase, to have their particular neighborhood set off from Taunton and incorporated as a new town under the name of Dighton. This petition was granted by the General Court in Boston, was approved by Governor Dudley, and on May 30, 1712, Dighton became a separate town, with its own meeting-house and with Joseph Poole and his father as two of the original citizens.

Joseph Poole was a "housewright," as he called himself in legal papers, but inasmuch as he left an estate both of real and personal property, it is probable that he was what would today be called a building contractor rather than a journeyman carpenter. We know from many recorded deeds that he dealt also in lands. No further data about Joseph Poole remain, other than these land deeds and the record of his will, which was probated August 12, 1745, and is now on file in the archives of the Bristol County probate court. His wife, Experience Poole, survived him for six or seven years, and by his will he distributed his Dighton property, consisting of "the land I now dwell on adjoining Taunton Great River" and other lots and meadow lands to his widow and to each of his nine children, mentioning all by name.

The four youngest appear today in the vital records of Dighton as follows:

Abigail Poole b. 6 April 1722; d. 1 Nov. 1743.

John Poole b. 15 June 1724; m. *Joanna Talbot*.

BENJAMIN POOLE b. 4 Aug. 1727; m. RUTH HUDSON.

Experience Poole b. 22 Nov. 1730; m. *Seth Reed*.

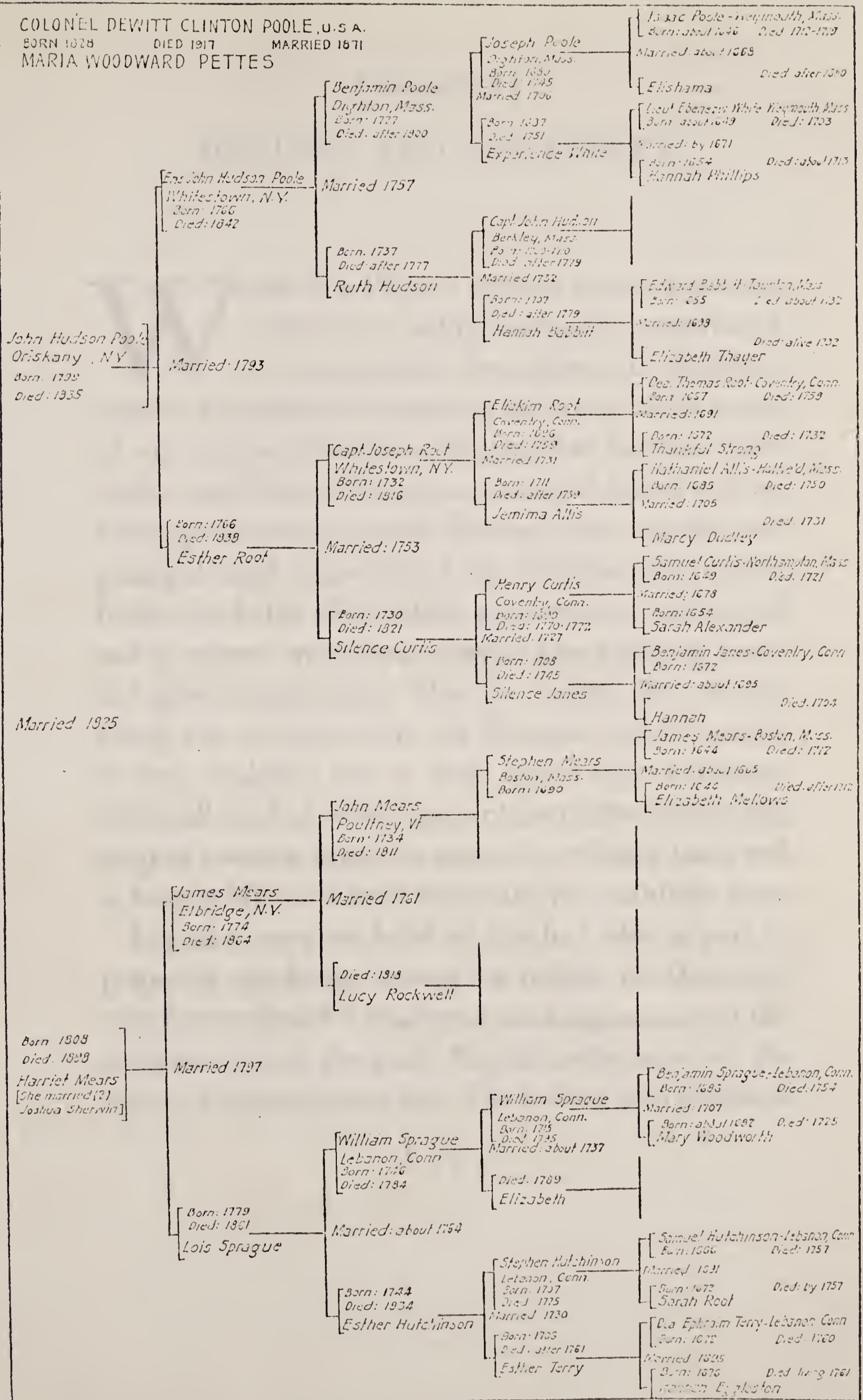
These children were of the fourth generation in this country, and the youngest son, Benjamin, was the representative of the line during the Revolutionary period.

His early life was spent in Dighton and in the neighboring Taunton River town of Berkley, where he was married. He saw no military service during the Revolutionary War, probably because of his age, for he was in his fifties during the years of the war, and, perhaps, due also to the fact that, as a shipwright, and later a shipbuilder on Nantucket Island, his services must have been needed in his vocation.

When Benjamin Poole was thirty years old he and Ruth Hudson were married, and it was she who brought the name Hudson into the later generations of the Poole family. In one of the earliest volumes of the old town records of Berkley is the following entry: "November ye 17th, 1757 Benjamin Poole of Dighton and Ruth Hudson of Berkley were this day married by the Rev'd Samuel Toby."

Ruth Hudson was in no way related to the English sea captain, Henry Hudson. DeWitt Clinton Poole and the four John Hudson Pooles descend in direct line from her father, Captain John Hudson, the shipbuilder of Berkley, Massachusetts, and it is his name, and not that of the English explorer, that has been carried on in the family.

COLONEL DEWITT CLINTON POOLE, U.S.A.
 BORN 1828 DIED 1917 MARRIED 1871
 MARIA WOODWARD PETTES



GENEALOGICAL CHART SHOWING THE FIVE GENERATIONS
 PRECEDING DEWITT CLINTON POOLE

Chapter II

DIGHTON AND NANTUCKET

I

WHEN the Pilgrim Fathers landed from the "Mayflower" at Plymouth, they encountered no opposition by the Indians to the establishment of their little settlement on the coast. In the spring of 1621 Captain Miles Standish, Jonathan Brewster, John Alden, and Edward Winslow journeyed inland with an Indian guide to the home of Massasoit, who was then the principal chief or sachem of the Wampanoags. There, before the lodge of the chief, presents were exchanged and a written treaty was entered into pledging peace and good-neighborship. That the written part of this treaty was understood by old Massasoit and his people is very doubtful; but in their hearts they welcomed this small band of white men, at least to the rather bleak strip of country along the shore line of their land; and as long as Massasoit lived the treaty was faithfully kept.

In many ways the hand of fate had taken a part in preparing conditions among the Indians of Massachusetts for the peaceful landing of the Pilgrims and for the establishment of the early English settlements on the shores of Massachusetts Bay. The Indians who inhabited

this part of the American coast belonged to outlying branches of the Algonquin tribe. They had been seen by the crews of European ships that occasionally visited these shores to fish and to trade with the Indians, fifteen or twenty years before the coming of the Pilgrims, and at that time the Indians were very numerous and quite warlike in their bearing.

In the year 1616 a terrible epidemic swept through the land, reducing the Indian population to a fraction of what it had been. This plague, as it is called by the early writers and in the Indian legends, was especially virulent and destructive near the coast, and in these districts the Indian population was almost wiped out. Probably some French or English trading ship brought smallpox, from the West India Islands, to this northern coast; and the infection, once started, spread far and wide among the vulnerable natives.

2

When the English settlements were first established the Indians were very few in number and their morale was so weakened by the plague that they made no serious opposition to the English until the newcomers began to spread from the coast settlements into the interior. This they were bound to do by the very nature of their race. Had not their Anglo-Saxon grandfathers pushed west, first from the European mainland to The British Isles

and thence to the coast of the New World? Have not their grandsons spread west from the thirteen original colonies on the American coast, first to the inland settlements of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island; then to the Indian lands of central and western New York and Pennsylvania, thence to the Old Northwest of the Ohio River and the Great Lakes country; and then, spanning the prairies and mountains by ox team, or following by sea the route around the Horn, to the lands of California and Oregon? Hardly pausing during the years of the great Civil War, have not the descendants of this same Anglo-Saxon stock pushed on to the last continental area in which the American Indian lived his natural, wild life—the upper Missouri River country and the plains of the Southwest?

Little did Massasoit and his sachems realize that by signing the first treaty of peace and good neighborhood with the handful of white men who had come in a great canoe from over the sea, they were signing the death warrant of the race of American Indians and the writ of expropriation of their lands from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico.

The very first spring after the signing of the Massasoit treaty, the Pilgrim Fathers sent out their first inland exploration party. This expedition into the Indian country was accompanied by friendly Indians—some of Massasoit's braves—acting as guides and interpreters. The party

moved out generally west from Plymouth toward the Narragansett Bay country, and on the third day of the march reached a fertile valley drained by a river which the Indians called the Te-ti-cut, and which flowed south to the sea instead of east, as did all the streams along the coast near Plymouth.

Here they found a most inviting locality for settlement; the river was teeming with herring; there were many meadows and cleared fields along the river, most of them left vacant by the death, during the plague, of their former Indian occupants; while back from the lowlands there was an excellent stand of timber. The report made by the expedition contains the following statement, which records what was probably the first timber cruise made in America: "We did find both Oake, Walnut-tree, Firre, Beach and exceeding great Chestnut-trees."

3

No settlement was made on the Te-ti-cut River nor at any interior point, until about the time that Edward Poole came over in 1635, but by then a considerable inland movement had definitely begun, and we read in an old record of that very year: "The Colonists of Massachusetts, on account of the increase of cattle, experiencing inconvenience from the nearness of their settlements to each other, began to emigrate from the first

settled towns. They went out, men, women and children, with their horses, cattle, and swine, as far west as the Connecticut River."

This inland colonizing movement brought the settlers in contact with new Indian tribes, who were more powerful and more hostile than the Indians of eastern Massachusetts; and even Massasoit's friendly tribesmen soon began to resent the unexpected encroachment on their lands by constantly increasing numbers of white people, with their towns and their clearings which interfered with the wild game and menaced the ways of life of the Indians in their traditional hunting ground.

Among the earliest of the inland settlements was the one made in the valley of the Te-ti-cut River, at the point which had been visited some fifteen years before by the first inland-exploration party from Plymouth. A group of men and women who had come to America from the neighborhood of the town of Taunton in Devonshire, moved into the Te-ti-cut valley from Boston, shortly after their arrival in the New World. Among this group of settlers were Elizabeth Poole and her brother William Poole, the former being an unmarried woman of considerable means and influence. She is often called the Mother of Taunton, for Taunton was the name given to both the new settlement and to the river, which the Indians had called the Te-ti-cut.

In one document of the period Elizabeth Poole is re-

ferred to as "Ye Ancient Mayde," although she was at the time only forty-two years old. There is nothing either in family or public records to indicate that Elizabeth Poole was related in any way to Edward Poole, of Weymouth. However, there was an Edward Babbitt among the early purchasers of land in the settlement of Taunton who interests us more directly, for his granddaughter, Hannah Babbitt, became the wife of Captain John Hudson, of Berkley, and the mother of Ruth Hudson, who married Benjamin Poole.

4

During the summer that Taunton was settled the Indians made their first hostile demonstration against this progressive intrusion of their forest home. Old Massasoit and his people still remained friendly, but a strong and numerous tribe known as the Pequots, who inhabited Connecticut, Rhode Island, and a portion of the neighboring part of Massachusetts, went on the warpath. The Pequots attempted to associate other tribes with them, but in this they were unsuccessful. In fact, a considerable contingent of friendly Indians from other tribes fought with the colonists. The war lasted less than a year, but it was a serious menace to the new settlements, especially those in Connecticut and in the Taunton River country. Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth colonies sent a force of one hundred and sixty men to join the expedition

against the Pequot stronghold on the Mystic River, and five of these men came from Weymouth.

If all the New England Indian tribes had united against the colonists at that time, as they did forty years later, they could undoubtedly have destroyed all of the English settlements; but the Pequots, fighting alone, were decisively defeated, their stronghold was burned, and the survivors of the tribe were ruthlessly hunted down and exterminated. The result was peace for forty years, during which time new white settlements were pushed farther and farther west, and those already established grew and expanded in their own neighborhoods.

More and more of the Indians resented this settling on their lands, the arrogance of the invaders, and the conversion of considerable numbers of "praying Indians" to Christianity. By barter and trade, the Indians had obtained a considerable supply of firearms and had become very skilful in the use of their new weapons, with a consequent raising of their fighting morale.

When old Massasoit died, his son, known among the colonists as King Philip, devoted his life to the organization of a general Indian uprising against all the white settlements in New England. He could see the handwriting on the wall, and he was wise enough to realize that unless all the Indian tribes united and drove out the English without further delay, the fate of the red man was sealed and the white man would soon dominate the

land. By personal appeal and with the aid of carefully selected lieutenants and emissaries, Philip, whose Indian name was Mi-an-to-no-mah, arranged for successful co-operation of all the New England Indian tribes in a relentless and savage war against the whites. Hostilities lasted for two years, during most of which time the Indians attacked towns of considerable size, burned outlying settlements, and slaughtered men, women, and children in the settlements which by then extended from Boston to the Connecticut River.

The first attack was made at Swansea, Massachusetts Bay Colony, near Taunton, in June, 1675, while the people were returning home from church. A party of Indians fired from ambush, killing several men and women; and then, after scalping the dead, they set fire to several houses and disappeared into the forest. This was the signal for a general attack on the settlements, and in many of the early affairs the Indians were terribly successful. Weymouth was attacked twice and the town of Lancaster, some fifty miles distant, was overwhelmed. It was in the latter place that Mrs. Rowlandson was taken prisoner and led into the captivity during which she kept a minute journal of her experiences.

5

The colonists were forced to put as many men into the field as they could spare from the towns and settlements.

The early history of Weymouth gives the names of more than fifty men of that town who saw active field service against the Indians. Two of Edward Poole's sons were among them: Benjamin, who was killed, and his younger brother, John, who returned in safety. One of the officers of the Weymouth contingent was Lieutenant Ebenezer White, whose daughter Experience grew up to become the wife of Joseph Poole.

Taunton was attacked on the day after the foray at Swansea, and all the families in the outer districts of the valley moved into town to be protected by the garrison house. Edward Babbitt, Ruth Hudson's great-grandfather, was living near Taunton with his family when hostilities began. When word came of the Sunday-morning attack on the neighboring town of Swansea the family moved into town, but tradition asserts that Edward Babbitt returned to his home the next morning for some personal belongings, among them a "cheese hoop," which he was loath to abandon. It was a fine June day; the countryside was beautiful and to all appearances delightfully peaceful as Babbitt, accompanied only by his faithful dog, made his way down the river. He reached home safely, gathered up the desired articles, and started back along a woodland path back from the river's edge—a route which probably seemed to offer greater safety. He had nearly regained the town when, evidently discovering the nearness of Indians, he climbed

a tree and hid himself in the foliage. As the Indians passed, unfortunately his dog barked, his hiding place was disclosed, and DeWitt's ancestor met a tragic death.

Deeds and other records show that for some years after their marriage Benjamin Poole and Ruth Hudson continued to live in Dighton, but in the spring of the second year of the American Revolution they moved to the island of Nantucket, where they settled in the quaint little town then called Sherburne but which now bears the same name as the island itself. Here Benjamin Poole, who was fifty-one years old at the time, continued his trade of shipwright until the close of the war.

When the family moved to Nantucket there were three children; the eldest was Abigail, who was in her teens, and the others were Benjamin Poole, Jr., and John Hudson Poole, the one about thirteen and the other eleven years old. Abigail was married on Nantucket and remained there the rest of her life, but the two boys accompanied their parents, a few years after the war, on their big move to the frontier country in the Mohawk Valley of New York State.

This first John Hudson Poole, who had been named for his mother's father, Captain John Hudson, the ship-builder of Berkley, is in a way the connecting link in the generations from Edward Poole of Weymouth down to the present-day members of the family. He was the great-great-grandson of Edward Poole and the great-

great-grandfather of John Hudson Poole, Jr., who lives today. He is the earliest of the line with whom we have direct personal contact, for those of the preceding generations are known to us only by genealogical records.

With the migration of Benjamin and Ruth Poole and their two sons to what at the close of the Revolution was "the West," the colonial history of the family ends and the Mohawk Valley days begin.

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Chapter III

THE MOHAWK VALLEY

I

AT the close of the Revolutionary War the white settlements in the central part of the state of New York extended only a short distance west of the falls of the Mohawk River, near Albany. Even these Mohawk Valley settlements and those in Cherry Valley had been attacked during the war, and in some cases completely destroyed by the cruel and relentless campaign of massacre and destruction carried on by the united forces of the Indians and the Tories in the conflict. The settlements in Cherry Valley were all but obliterated; and had it not been for the gallant defense of Fort Schuyler, the entire Mohawk Valley would have been visited by the torch, the tomahawk, and the scalping knife.

The cessation of hostilities speedily led to a rehabilitation of the old settlements and to the extension of homesteads and new cultivation so far as existing treaties with the Indians would permit; and immediately the more enterprising and pioneering spirits of New England began to turn their eyes toward this new country of the West. Between 1783 and 1800 a tide of emigra-

tion, principally from Massachusetts and Connecticut, was directed into the upper Hudson River country and the Mohawk Valley.

This New York country has an interesting and romantic history from early colonial times down to and including the war fought by its sturdy inhabitants, along with their brothers to the east and south, to gain their political independence and to establish the thirteen British colonies in America as a united country. Much more is known of New England and Virginia colonial days and folkways than of those of Central New York; and now that we have followed the Pooles from New England to their new home, and before going on with the family story, a short sketch of the history and romance of the Mohawk Valley will give a clearer picture of the pioneer background that helped to shape the life and character of the subject of this biography.

2

Although Verrazano, a Florentine in the service of France, is thought to have been the first European to sail past Sandy Hook, the discovery of the bay of New York and the river which flows into it from the north country is credited to Henry Hudson, an Englishman in the service of the States-General of Holland, who in the month of September, 1609, sailed the "Half Moon"

into the bay and on up the river to a point a little below the present city of Albany.

On his return voyage Hudson landed in England, whence he dispatched an account of his adventures to the Dutch East India Company, with a request that the Dutch provide him with means to make another voyage. The British Government, however, forbade his sailing again in the service of Holland, and shortly placed him in command of an English ship, with orders to explore the northern coast of America in the hope of finding a northwest passage to India. This he attempted to do, but, after he had discovered and entered the bay which now bears his name, his crew mutinied, and, putting him and some of his loyal men into a small boat, abandoned them to their fate. They were never heard of again and must have perished of starvation or exposure.

3

The country discovered by Hudson, now known as New York State, was largely inhabited and entirely dominated by a large population of Indians, distinguished among all the aborigines of North America for their intelligence and prowess. Five distinct and independent tribes, speaking a common language and practicing similar customs, were united in a confederacy or nation which for durability and power was unequaled in our early Indian history. By the English they were at first

called the Five Nations, and later the Six Nations, but they are best known as the Iroquois.

Two hundred years later, our western pioneers encountered a similar confederacy of Indian tribes, equally intelligent, warlike, and well organized. These were the Sioux, and their home was that vast domain comprised in the watersheds of the upper Missouri and the Yellowstone rivers, including all the country now in the states of Wyoming, Montana, and the Dakotas. But in the early part of the seventeenth century the Sioux and their prairies, foothills, and mountains were distant and unknown; while the Indians of the Hudson and Mohawk river valleys were of immediate importance to the Dutch and the English settlers.

The Iroquois also came in contact with the French in Canada, for they claimed, and to some extent occupied, all the country to the west and north of the Mohawk Valley, as far as Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, and the St. Lawrence River, and to the south to include the valley of the Hudson and the headwaters of the Delaware and the Susquehanna rivers. Their war parties and larger expeditions carried them into Canada and also far to the west and south of their traditional hunting grounds.

The confederated tribes forming the Iroquois nation were the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas, and, later, the Tuscaroras. In cases of local interest or great emergency each tribe acted separately and in-

dependently; but a general council frequently assembled at Onondaga, near the center of their territory, to consider questions of peace and war and all other matters which concerned their interests as a whole. From the first the Iroquois, especially the Mohawks, were friendly to the Dutch, who, having established themselves on Manhattan Island at the mouth of the Hudson, had pushed on up the river to a point near its junction with the Mohawk River. There in 1618, at Fort Orange, their little post just below the present site of Albany, they made their first treaty with these Indians.

In 1662 a small colony of Dutch under Arent Van Curler moved west from Fort Orange and settled at a point on the Mohawk River about fifteen miles up from its confluence with the Hudson. The Iroquois Indians always spoke of the lower Mohawk Valley by the Indian name Scho-no-we, meaning the gate or entrance to their country, and it is from this Indian word, which the Dutch could not render with phonetic accuracy, that Schenectady, the name of the new settlement, was derived. The hardy first settlers of Schenectady saw perilous times from the beginning, and it took all their Dutch grit and pertinacity to withstand the hardships and to meet the dangers and frequent disasters of their life, surrounded as they were by the warlike Mohawks and exposed to the frequent raids of French and Canadian Indians into the Mohawk country. Protected by only a stockade of posts

around their log houses, they lived and thrived and in time made firm allies of the Iroquois against the "white and red savages of Canada," as they called the French and their allies, the Hurons and the Algonquins.

The Indians of America, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, in the course of the long and really pathetic process of their gradual extermination and the almost complete expropriation of their lands by the white man, have always been quick to recognize and appreciate any really fair and honest treatment they have received. Although their leading men could intuitively sense the vital menace to their existence in the relentless advance of the whites into the lands which from time beyond memory had been theirs, they remained faithful to alliances with bodies of white men who had dealt fairly with them—and this despite the constant underlying resentment they must have felt against all whites as invaders of their lands and destroyers of their ways of life. On the other hand, all Indians have been quick to sense and resent any act or policy of injustice, dishonesty, or unwarranted invasion, and every Indian fight, battle, and war from early colonial times down to those within the memory of men still living was provoked by either real or imagined unfair treatment of the red man. Alas, too often it has been the former.

The Dutch treated the Indians fairly. No lands were occupied except after purchase of title from the Indians,

and in matters of barter and trade, although they surely were close dealers, the Dutch were honest and true to their word.

4

There was another very practical reason for the friendship which grew up between the Iroquois and the Dutch settlers, in the early colonial days of New York State. This was the fact that the Indians could obtain from the settlers guns, ammunition, and other equipment. The confederated tribes of the Iroquois were distinguished for their power and sagacity in war. War was their delight, and believing, as did all the Plains Indians, that it was the only honorable activity of man, they instilled in the minds of their children from early life ideals of military glory. They pushed their expeditions north into Canada, east across the Connecticut River, west to the banks of the Mississippi, and far south of the Delaware. Formidable by their numbers, their fighting qualities, and their strategic skill, they were held in respect and even in awe by their most powerful enemies, and they exacted both tribute and obedience from the weak.

The first serious check to their military power came in 1608 when a permanent French settlement was made in Canada by Champlain, who founded Quebec. At this time the Iroquois were fighting a desperate war with the Hurons and Algonquins, who inhabited the country along the St. Lawrence River. Champlain, unfortunately

for the future of New France, entered immediately into an active alliance with the latter tribes. He furnished them with guns—new weapons in Indian warfare—and even sent French soldiers and *coureurs du bois* with the newly armed Canadian Indians on their expeditions, thus enabling them to gain a temporary ascendancy.

The Iroquois, who had always been victorious under the former conditions of Indian warfare, and who regarded the Hurons and Algonquins almost as vassals, could not brook this defeat. An underlying hatred for the French was planted deep in their hearts and in their tribal traditions. They turned to the Dutch as their only possible source of supply for guns, powder, and shot—those miraculous innovations which, having revolutionized warfare in Europe, were now to do the same thing in the New World. The opportune arrival and assistance of the Dutch enabled the Iroquois to regain their power and prestige, and this, together with the fair dealing and conciliatory manner of the new settlers in their land, served permanently to establish their friendship.

In 1664 New Netherlands was surrendered to the English by Peter Stuyvesant, last of the Dutch governors. New Amsterdam became New York, Fort Orange became Albany, and the Province of New York became a British colony, although practically all the original settlers remained, with their Dutch names and customs and their sturdy racial qualities. The British

authorities permitted them to remain with rights of property and citizenship, thus gaining loyalty and co-operation as well as a continuation of friendly relations with the Iroquois, which latter the English exerted themselves to preserve down to and including the years of the Revolutionary War.

5

The Mohawk River, extending westward from the mid-reaches of the Hudson through a beautiful valley of fruitful soil, early presented an allurement for agricultural settlement, yet it was not until about fifty years before the Revolution that white men began to settle in this territory.

In 1738 a young Irishman named William Johnson came to America to take charge of a large tract of land owned by his uncle, Admiral Peter Warren. This domain was situated in the lower Mohawk Valley and contained some 14,000 acres. Johnson selected a location for his storehouse and dwelling at a point about one-half mile upstream from the old bridge over the Mohawk River at Amsterdam. In time other buildings were erected until the place was dignified with the name of Johnson's Settlement. This man attained great power and influence in the Mohawk country. He was appointed general superintendent of Indian affairs, and it is probable that no white man has ever exerted so long-lived

and so powerful an influence over any large group of American Indians.

His second and permanent home, a fine stone colonial mansion which still stands near the village of Johnstown, was constructed about 1743, and there he lived for thirty years, surrounded by his white retainers and the Indians. The Mohawks looked up to him as their father, paid the utmost deference to his advice, and consulted with him on all occasions. Out of compliment to them he frequently wore the Indian dress and received them cordially at his manor house, where sometimes thousands of them gathered for feast and council. He rendered very important service as a major general in the British forces during the French and Indian War, in recognition of which he was created a baronet and, as Sir William Johnson, was granted five thousand pounds sterling by the British Parliament.

Sir William died in 1774, and his death cast a feeling of gloom throughout the length and breadth of the Mohawk Valley, where for thirty-five years he had been a firm and successful administrator of the Indians and a companion, counselor, and friend of the sturdy Hollanders, the thrifty Palatines, and the steady English and Scotch who had peopled the valley, and, with his advice and assistance, had converted primeval forests into smiling meadowlands.

There are some who claim that had he lived he would

have sided with the colonists in the Revolution, which so closely followed his death. His sons, however, having been educated largely in England, were Tories from the first days of trouble between the colonies and the mother country, and, using their inherited influence with the leading chiefs of the Iroquois, they drew these fierce warriors into the conflict and arrayed them against the colonists with whom they had so long been friends. Had Sir William Johnson lived there might have been no battle of Oriskany, no siege of Fort Schuyler, no Cherry Valley massacres, and no Indian raids in the Mohawk Valley.

Chapter IV

ORISKANY

I

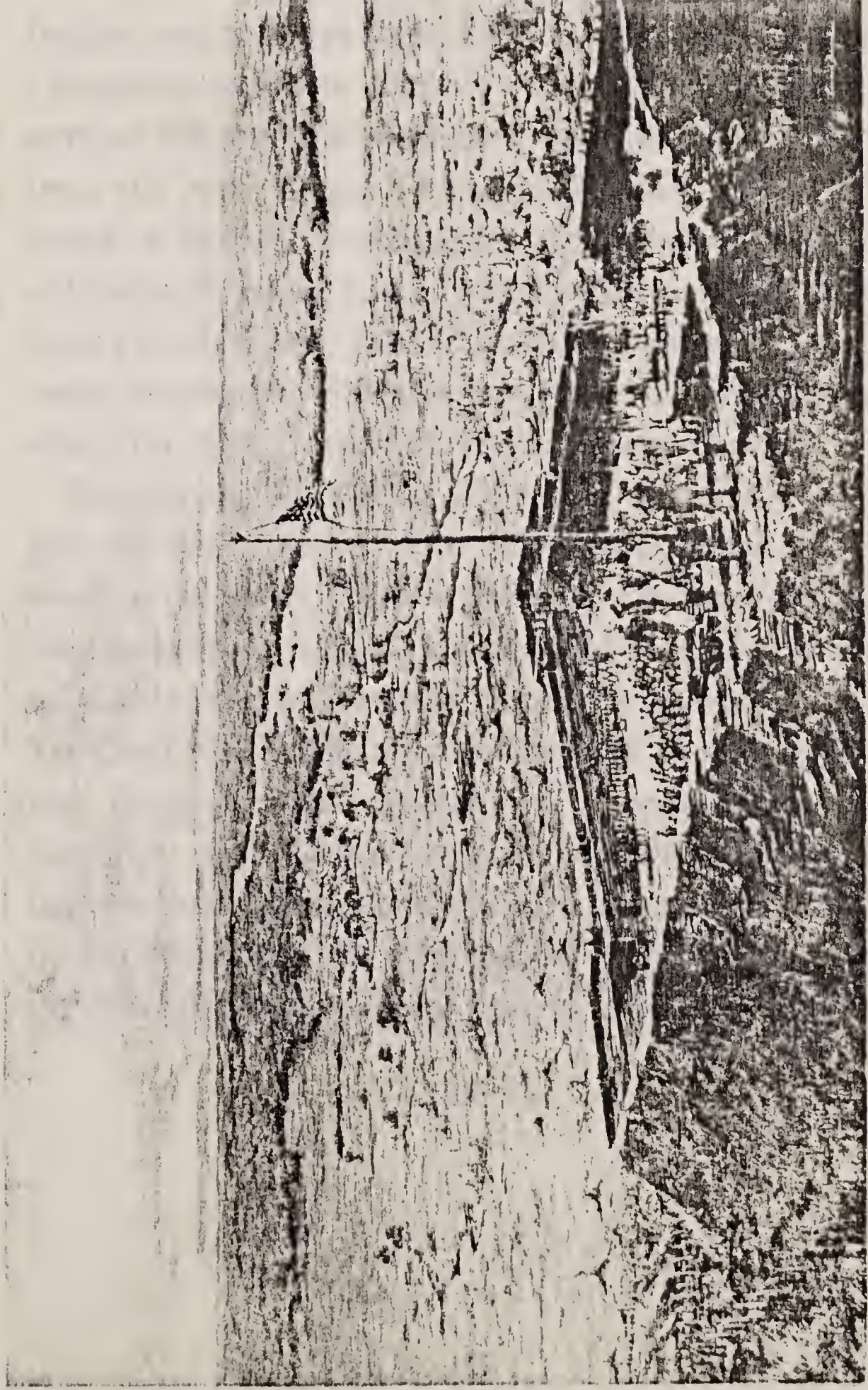
IN colonial days the upper valley of the Mohawk River possessed considerable value from a military standpoint as being an important part of one of the two inland water routes between New York and Canada. By the more direct of these routes, canoes and light bateaux starting from Albany could go north along the headwaters of the Hudson River, with only one portage reach Lake Champlain, and thence gain Montreal or Quebec by the St. Lawrence River. The other route, for similar craft, left the Hudson River above Albany and followed, in a westerly direction, up the Mohawk River to a point near its headwaters, at the site of the present city of Rome. Here there was a portage, or carrying place, of about one mile to Wood Creek, which was navigable for these light craft to Lake Oneida, whence a continuous water route to Montreal was available by way of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. During the colonial wars with the French and the Canadian Indians, these routes were often used, and during times of peace white traders, trappers, and missionaries, as well as Indians and *coureurs du bois*, used them constantly in both directions.

To control the important portage from the Mohawk River to Wood Creek, a log and earthwork fort was built by the British colonial authorities in 1758, and given the name of Fort Stanwix. The ruins of this fort still remain on the banks of the Mohawk River at Rome, only a few miles from the old Poole farm at Oriskany. Fort Stanwix had fallen into decay before the beginning of the Revolution, and in 1776 General Schuyler, who commanded the American forces in New York, ordered a new fortification to be built in its place. The work was begun immediately but was not finished until the following year. The reconstructed post was renamed Fort Schuyler, and in the summer of 1777, while withstanding a siege by British, Tories, and Indians, it had the distinction of being the first fortified place to fly the newly adopted American flag, the Stars and Stripes.

2

Five miles down the Mohawk from Fort Schuyler, where Oriskany Creek flows into the river from the south, was fought one of the bloodiest battles of the Revolutionary War—an action which, although it is not well known, had a very important influence on the struggle for our country's independence.

The campaign for the summer of 1777 was looked forward to with great hopes by the British ministers at home and the British generals in America, and during



HOISTING THE STARS AND STRIPES AT FORT SCHUYLER, JULY, 1777

From a painting in the Jervis Memorial Library, Rome, New York

the previous winter vast preparations had been made for its successful prosecution. General Sir Henry Clinton, in command of the southern British army in and about New York City, was to move up the Hudson on Albany, while General Burgoyne, with a large force of well-disciplined troops and a considerable train of artillery, accompanied by a numerous body of Canadians and Indians, was to move south from Canada over the Lake Champlain route, to effect a junction with Clinton's army at Albany, thus completely cutting off New York from the New England colonies. A third force, composed of British, Tories, and Indians under command of Colonel Barry St. Leger, was to move into New York from Canada by the Lake Ontario and Mohawk Valley route, devastating the countryside as far as Albany, where the three British commands were to unite.

Burgoyne entered Lake Champlain in June; in early July he had captured Fort Ticonderoga and moved south to the upper Hudson River near Saratoga, hardly fifty miles from Albany; but he could move no farther, so closely was he hemmed in and attacked by New York and New England colonial troops. From this position Burgoyne tried desperately to communicate by messenger with Clinton, who he assumed must already have reached Albany; but his couriers were all captured by the Americans, and even had they succeeded in passing through the enveloping American forces and reach-

ing Albany, they would have accomplished nothing of value, for, due to a delay of orders issued from far-away England, General Clinton had not as yet passed West Point on the Hudson.

Now let us go back to the little fort, at the head of the Mohawk Valley, which had been known for many years as Fort Stanwix but which was now rebuilt by the Americans and renamed Fort Schuyler. In the latter part of April, 1777, Colonel Peter Gansevoort, with the third regiment of New York State troops, was ordered to Fort Schuyler. The fort was still unfinished, and the following few months were spent by the new garrison in advancing the work, but there was not time to complete it before the fort was attacked.

News of the movement of St. Leger's expedition up the St. Lawrence and along the shores of Lake Ontario to Oswego had been brought through to the Americans by friendly Indians, and on July 17 Brigadier General Nicholas Herkimer, who commanded the militia of central New York, published the following proclamation to the American colonists throughout the Mohawk Valley:

Whereas it appears certain that the enemy, of about 2,000 strong, Christians and savages, are arrived at Oswego with the intention to invade our frontiers, I think it proper and most necessary for the defense of our country, and it shall be so ordered by me as soon as the enemy approaches, that every male person, being in health, from 16 to 60 years of age, in this

our country, shall, as in duty bound, repair immediately, with arms and accoutrements, to the place to be appointed in my orders, and will then march to oppose the enemy with vigour, as true patriots, for the just defense of their country.

Colonel St. Leger left Oswego late in July with his mixed force consisting of British regulars and some Hessian riflemen, a considerable body of Tories formed as a regiment called the Royal Greens, under Sir John Johnson (who had recently inherited the vast estate and some of the influence of his father), and a swarm of Indian allies under the famous Mohawk chief, Thayendanege, or, to give him his English name, Joseph Brant. This force, making all told some 1,700 men, arrived with several pieces of artillery before Fort Schuyler on August 3.

The British commander published a long and labored proclamation denouncing the American Revolution and calling upon brave old Colonel Peter Gansevoort and his little garrison of New York troops to surrender. The demand for surrender closed with this thinly veiled threat: "I expect an immediate answer, as the Indians are extremely impatient, and if this proposal is rejected, I am afraid it will be attended with very fatal consequences not only to you and your garrison, but to the whole country down the Mohawk River, such consequences as would be very repugnant to my sentiments of humanity, but, after this, entirely out of my power to prevent."

Having hoisted the Stars and Stripes to the peak of his

flagpole, Colonel Gansevoort replied: "In answer to your letter of this date, I have only to say that it is my determined resolution, with the forces under my command, to defend this Fort at every hazard to the last extremity, in behalf of the United American States, who have placed me here to defend it against all their enemies."

3

Word having spread through the Mohawk Valley that Fort Schuyler was being attacked, the militia of the valley settlements was ordered out immediately and General Herkimer found himself at the head of a column of 800 men marching in all haste up the valley to the relief of the fort. Herkimer led a fine body of men. Many of the members of the American Committee of Safety were among the officers, but from a military standpoint the troops were poorly equipped and sadly lacking in military training and discipline. Here was another illustration of the old truth that it takes more than a group of brave men to make a good military organization. Little order was preserved on the march, and the most simple military precautions to guard against surprise were woefully neglected.

Information of the approach of Herkimer and his column reached the commander of the British force besieging Fort Schuyler when the Americans were still

two days' march from the garrison they were hurrying to relieve. Colonel St. Leger thereupon decided to send a force consisting of Sir John Johnson's Royal Greens and the entire body of Indians to intercept and, if possible, annihilate the American relief column. The Indians of the attacking force were under Chief Thayendanege, and it was on his advice that Sir John decided to draw the Americans into an ambushade.

The position selected for the attack was five miles down the valley from Fort Schuyler and a short distance west of the point where Oriskany Creek joins the Mohawk River. At this point there were two ravines running from south to north and separated by a rather level plateau about fifty feet higher than the bottom of the ravines. The west ravine was assigned to Johnson's Royal Greens, many of them Tories from the Mohawk Valley, who were hidden along the top of its eastern slope. The Indians rapidly took their positions around the other three sides of the plateau, leaving an opening in their lines only where the old wagon road came in from the east to cross the first of the two ravines on a sort of corduroy causeway. It was along this road that Herkimer and his men were advancing. All around were trees and low bushes, filled with fallen timber, while masses of dead branches and underbrush bordered each side of the road as it stretched out east and west, parallel with the Mohawk River, which was about three-quar-

ters of a mile to the north. In the lowland were tall swamp grass and occasional groups of cat-tails, with here and there a scrub pine or willow, making in all an ideal position for the treacherous concealment of the Mohawk warriors.

The morning was sultry and lowering, and the rumblings of a distant August thunderstorm were in the air, unheeded and unnoticed by bluff old Nicholas Herkimer and his Colonials, whose minds were intent upon reaching the fort. The General and two of his regimental commanders seem to have been riding at the head of the troops, as they started down the slope of the first ravine, followed in a joyous and rollicking manner by the column of men and the baggage train. The leading troops had crossed the first ravine and gained the edge of the plateau; the main body was crowded on the log causeway and on the two slopes of the declivity; the baggage train, guarded by one company of men from the neighborhood of Fonda, was still waiting for an opportunity to cross, when suddenly a musket shot rang out and Colonel Cox, at the head of the column, fell headlong upon the neck of his horse, which turned and at a mad gallop dashed down the slope and into the startled mass of troops.

Instantly, for this shot had been the signal for the attack, swarms of red devils dashed upon the wagon train and the Fonda company, firing and yelling in hell-

ish delight, separating them from the troops below, and fairly overwhelming them with superior numbers. This rush of the Indians closed the gap in the cordon that was now drawn around the seemingly doomed Americans, while from every tree and bush rang out a burst of musketry and the wild war cry of the Iroquois.

For a time the American column was thrown into almost fatal confusion as the troops at the crossing realized that they were surrounded and were being furiously attacked by hordes of painted savages, with apparently no avenue of escape. Many had been killed outright by the first fire of the Indians, while others, wounded, had fallen into the marsh either to be drowned or to receive the death stroke by tomahawk or knife from the foe who became bold at the evidently helpless situation of the Colonials.

General Herkimer, although taken by surprise, was equal to the occasion. Urging his horse down among the troops in the ravine he succeeded in restoring some order and in pulling the men who had crossed the causeway up onto the level plateau. Here, however, they were met by the fire of Sir John Johnson's Royal Greens, posted along the top of the second ravine, and by the fire of the Indians concealed on both flanks. Colonel Bellinger, who commanded the American baggage train and its escort, rallied the men who had not yet crossed, on the hill to the east of the log cause-

way, where they parked the wagon train and formed themselves into circular squads, leaving the bottom of the fatal ravine to the dead and dying and to the occasional prowling savage, with ready knife, searching for scalps and plunder.

Hardly had Herkimer succeeded in getting the survivors of the leading regiment into some sort of order on the plateau than he was severely wounded in the leg by a bullet that killed his horse under him. His men carried him up the slope of the plateau to the base of a beech tree which stood at a commanding point. There he was placed against his saddle and, having lighted his pipe, he continued to direct the battle with the utmost firmness and composure. For another hour the fighting continued with savage intensity. Time and again the Indians tried unsuccessfully to rush and overwhelm the Americans, and finally the Tories ceased fire and charged with the bayonet. Then, more than ever, did the contest become a death struggle, hand to hand and foot to foot. Never did brave men stand a charge more bravely. The Colonials held their ground.

At this moment there was a blinding flash followed by a crash of thunder, and, with roaring wind and swaying trees, a deluge of rain burst on the field. For nearly an hour the rain fell in torrents, but even the fury of the storm and the crashing of falling trees did not prevent both sides from making preparations to renew the strug-



HERKIMER AT THE BATTLE OF ORISKANY

From a painting in the Public Library, Utica, New York

gle. The wounded bound up their wounds, every musket was carefully loaded and protected from the rain, each soldier refreshed himself with food and water and waited for the cessation of the storm.

General Herkimer formed his men higher on the plateau and succeeded also in drawing-in the troops under Colonel Bellinger from the east side of the ravine. Placing them in a rough circle, with each man protected by a tree or log, he ordered them to adopt a new method of fighting to counteract the operations of the Indians, who, as soon as they saw a gun discharged from behind a tree, rushed upon and tomahawked the marksman before he had time to reload. To prevent this the General ordered two men to take each tree, one to fire at a time, the other reserving his fire for the Indian who might seek their scalps.

The new position of the consolidated American force and the new system of bush fighting soon showed results and the Indians suffered heavily, so heavily that they began to show signs of losing heart. Seeing this, Sir John ordered forward his last Tory reserve, two companies of his Royal Greens. Nearly all these men were from the Mohawk Valley and were former neighbors of the men they were fighting. When they had advanced near enough for mutual recognition, the conflict became more desperate than before, revenge and hatred raging in every heart. The Americans fired upon

them as they advanced, and then springing from their cover attacked them with bayonets and clubbed muskets, or in some cases with knife or bare hands, throttling and stabbing and sometimes dying in a desperate embrace. The fury of the attack was resistless; a large number of Tories were slain, while the Indians, seeing with what spirit the Americans delivered their charge, and tired and demoralized by their own heavy losses in the six grueling hours, raised their retreating cry of "Oonah! Oonah!" and fled in every direction; while the Tories, seeing that their red allies had deserted them, retreated, leaving the Americans masters of the field.

The unsuccessful attack at Oriskany was a heavy blow to the British force besieging Fort Schuyler, especially as exaggerated reports of the approach of more American forces soon reached Colonel St. Leger.

The Indians, disappointed in not having obtained plunder, were enraged by their losses at Oriskany, while the regular troops were discouraged and alarmed at the defection and menacing attitude of their savage allies. The siege of Fort Schuyler was abandoned, and St. Leger retired in great confusion, leaving at his camp a large part of his artillery and baggage. The gallant defense of Fort Schuyler and the success of the Americans on the bloody field of Oriskany contributed to the failure of the whole British campaign which culminated in the surrender of Burgoyne and his army at Saratoga.

Chapter V

LANDS OF THE IROQUOIS

I

THE British captured New York harbor in the fall of the year 1776 and it was not until seven years later, in November, 1783, that the last ships of King George's fleet put to sea. With the fleet and from other seaports along the coasts of the thirteen newly recognized, independent states went many who had been loyal to the mother country during the war and whose property and civil rights had thereby been forfeited. There were other loyalists who could not sail away. They were the Indians whose forefathers had owned the lands of the New York hinterland from time immemorial, and they remained to suffer the loss of both their lands and their freedom. The Iroquois, true to their wampum treaties with Sir William Johnson, had fought with the British, and now their lands were to be taken by the victorious soldiers. These domains, extending from the Hudson and the lower Mohawk valleys west to Lake Erie, were parceled out under patents and military tracts, and the Six Nations were in large part forced to move into Canada. The miserable remnant was concentrated on two or three small reservations with-

in the confines of their once glorious hunting ground.

Immediately the migration of English colonials from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Vermont began, and for a generation continued by land and by water, whole families and family groups moving west, always west, to take up the virgin lands and forests of the Mohawks, the Oneidas, the Onondagas, the Cayugas, and the Senecas. The country was a poorly explored wilderness, dotted with only a few white settlements and outlying farms in the Mohawk Valley. A beautiful wilderness it was, with abundant streams, wooded hills, maples, elms, and grass-land meadows. West of Albany and Schenectady there were only frontier towns, and old Fort Schuyler at the head of the valley was still a military post in the Iroquois country.

In May, 1784, Hugh White, with his large family, left a comfortable farm near Middletown, Connecticut, to establish a new home in the West. Four well-grown sons and their younger sister accompanied White and his wife on their trip down the Connecticut River, out into Long Island Sound, and then up the Hudson River to Albany. There they were joined by the eldest son, who had made the trip overland from Middletown to Albany on foot, driving the two yokes of oxen that pulled their heavy wagon loaded with household goods. The Whites covered the fifteen miles to Schenectady over the good turnpike and then pushed on up the Mohawk Valley for a

hundred miles, using a bateau on the river, with the ox teams, which were driven in turn by the boys, keeping pace along the miserable road on the bank until they had passed the last of the pre-Revolutionary settlements.

Early in June they reached the mouth of Sauquoit Creek and there built a log cabin for shelter during the survey and partition of the land that White and Zephaniah Platt had purchased on the south side of the Mohawk River between this point and Oriskany Creek, a few miles above. This was the beginning of the settlement known as Whitestown, and at that time the Indian title to the land had not been completely extinguished, but by 1788 the title was clear and the tide of New England settlers soon was at its flood.

From Coventry, Connecticut, came Joseph Root with his wife Silence and their large family of boys and girls. Joseph had seen service as a commissioned officer all through the Revolutionary War. His record shows that he was first "called out for Lexington Alarm, 2 days, 1775," and that in May, 1777, he was appointed lieutenant of the fourth company of the Fifth Connecticut. He still carried his military title when he moved to New York State, after the war, for the census of 1790 lists him in Whitestown as "Captain Joseph Root."

An old family Bible, printed in Edinburgh in 1762, was brought from Coventry with the Root family and is now in the Utica home of a great-great-granddaughter.

On the title-page just before the Apocrypha is written "Joseph Root, Coventry 1773," and on the following front papers are recorded the vital records of the family for the next one hundred and fifty years. With this sequence of births, marriages, and deaths is included the following quaint entry:

Coventry the 16th day of September 1788 then Oliver Root* set out to come up to Whites Town and he got up to Whites Town the last day of September went down to Coventry the 6th day of December. We was twelve days a coming up to Whites Town the third day of March 1789.

Benjamin Poole and his family were among these first settlers in the Whitestown district, and with them came a cousin named Simeon Poole. The exact year of their coming is not known but the records of the first United States census, that of 1790, show them in Whites-town. Benjamin and Ruth Poole seem to have moved later into Jefferson County to settle near Sackett's Harbor, but their son John Hudson Poole remained, for his name appears on the list of subscribers to a fund for building the first bridge across the Mohawk River at the place that is now Utica.

In 1793 a Presbyterian church was formed in the Whitestown district at the village of Oriskany. Joseph Root is listed in the old church records as one of the organizers, and under date of December 2 of the church's

*Oliver Root was one of the brothers of Esther Root Poole.

first year appears the marriage record of Esther Root and John Hudson Poole. The census of 1800 lists the young couple as of Whitestown, and in 1802 John Hudson Poole was designated ensign of the local company of Oneida County militia.

A few years after his marriage John Hudson Poole purchased the farm, on the Oriskany road, which was his home for the rest of his life, and it was there that he and Esther raised their family of three boys and three girls. The eldest son, born in 1799, was named for his father, and in this narrative he will be called Hudson Poole to distinguish him from his father John Hudson Poole, who was born in Dighton, Massachusetts, in 1766.

2

In 1793 the Federal Government opened a post office for this district and Simeon Poole had the first contract to carry the "United States Mail" between Whitestown and Canajoharie. Needless to say, he carried it on horseback and only when the road was passable.

Early Whitestown deeds show that Simeon owned about two hundred acres in the Sadaquada Patent, next to the village of Oriskany. He purchased this land in 1791 from Zephaniah Platt, and the deed of record was witnessed by Hugh White. Simeon sold out after his pioneer mail route had been awarded to another deserving Federalist, and went south to the new capital at

Washington. He wrote frequently to his cousins left behind in the little village of Oriskany, and Hudson Poole remembered having heard his father read Simeon's letters giving accounts of the arrest of Aaron Burr, in which arrest Simeon had a part; and of the trial of Burr for high treason, which took place in Richmond in 1807. The Pooles disliked Burr, so these letters were full and interesting in their description of Richmond during those sweltering Virginia summer days. They told of the thousands of persons who had come from afar, so high was the feeling running against Burr, and how they were sleeping in tents or in the very wagons in which they had journeyed to Richmond; how the throngs streamed up and down the streets, pushing and shoving in and out of tavern doors, while those who could, fought and squeezed their way into the courthouse or stood on window sills to catch a glimpse of Chief Justice John Marshall, of the attorneys for the prosecution and for the defense, of that celebrated Virginia jury, and of the accused, a quiet, dignified little gentleman in black silk and with powdered hair.

The trial dragged through the summer months, and on September 1 the case went to the jury, which, with surprising promptness, returned its verdict: "We of the jury say that Aaron Burr is not proved to be guilty under this indictment by any evidence submitted to us. We therefore find him not guilty." The country was

astounded, President Jefferson was furious and talked of impeaching the Chief Justice, and Aaron Burr, who had served as one of Washington's most brilliant young officers and had been Vice President in Jefferson's first term, bowed himself out of the courtroom that day and into a retirement that amounted to oblivion.

3

Immediately west of the Oriskany Patent was the large military tract comprising millions of acres of the lands of the Oneidas and the Senecas. Farther west, in what was called the Genesee country, was another large tract, set aside for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as its equity in these Indian lands—to be used as a sort of prototype of the so-called soldiers' bonus of today. At the close of the Revolution, the Continental Congress had no funds with which to pay the discharged soldiers in specie. For their services, the men who had borne arms were obliged to take land warrants or scrip. By 1782 the Continental currency amounted to nearly \$300,000,000, but it had become so depreciated in value that \$100 in specie would buy \$7500 in scrip. In the period between the close of the war and the adoption of the Constitution, the value of this paper had dropped so low that it was being sold by the soldiers for a few cents on the dollar. Not many of the soldiers who took land warrants settled on the tracts. Most of them sold their rights, often for a mere

trifle, to speculators who resold to settlers, or hoarded the paper to be redeemed when the new nation came into being.

Some of the newcomers had heard from the soldiers about the country, but generally it was a process of speculation and promotion which brought the New Englanders, who wished to try their fortune farther west, into actual ownership of the new acreage in these military tracts.

In Poultney, across the Vermont line, lived James Mears. He had gone there from Sharon, Connecticut, where he was born one year before the first shot was fired on the village green at Lexington. Although he was six feet two, and could carry a one-hundred-pound sack of grain on each shoulder, and stop, with his load on his back, to chat and laugh on the way from his wagon to the mill, things were pretty dull in Poultney for a young man of twenty-four. Stories of "the West" drifted into Poultney, and James "got the fever." If Lois Sprague would marry him, he would go West, to the new country that held so much promise for strong and ambitious young men. Family legend tells that early on the morning of January 4, 1797, he was going along the road, on his father's plow mare, with Lois Sprague riding sideways behind him. They were headed for the farm of a Reverend Mr. Dobbins, who lived across the creek on the Troy road. Mr. Dobbins was at home

From the family Bible of James Mears here first named

[678]

From the ^{family} Bible of James Mears, here first named.
BIRTHS. BIRTHS.

James Mears was born
April 11th 1774.

Scis. Mears was born

February 26th 1777.

married Pomfret Vt

Eliza Mears was born
September 30th 1777.

Henry Mears was born
July 31st 1799.

John Mears was born
December 12th 1800.

Chauncy Mears was born
October 29th 1802.

Saura Mears was born
February 15th 1804.

Harriet Mears was born
March 31st 1808.
died 1876.

Eliza Mears was born
April 13th 1806.

James Mears was born
July 26th 1808.

Maryann Mears was born
April 4th 1812.

William Allen Mears was born
April 2nd 1814.

Maria Louisa Mears was born
April 5th 1816.

Charles Sprague Mears
was born January 12th 1818
died 1899

Henry Mears was born
Aug 31st 1826

and ready to tie the knot, but there was ice in the creek, and the water was running so high that James would not trust the old plow mare to ford it.

Lois was small, but she was made of that colonial stuff that did not stop for difficulties. She told James to tie the mare to a tree by the side of the road, as a sort of bucolic bridesmaid; then she led James to the edge of the creek and called to the parson to read the service on his side.

"I, James, take thee Lois," shouted Mr. Dobbins . . . "I, James, take thee Lois," came the response—and before the mare had munched two mouthfuls of snowy timothy Mr. and Mrs. James Mears were riding back to Poultney.

We next find them in the little New York town of Fabius, "out West, in the Military Tract," just south of the Old Seneca Turnpike. Here that reliable source of information, the United States Census, picks them up in 1800 on a farm with a few head of cattle, a few sheep, and two children. James made the farm prosper and Lois kept house and "minded" the children. Concerning the latter it was his wont to say: "Always one in the cradle, one on the knee, and a new bundle from Heaven arriving every other spring."

Farming was all right—the herds and the family were increasing; but at the end of seventeen years, just as in the old days in Poultney, James was "getting the itch to move," as the farmers said. Only a few leagues north of Fabius was the line of the new canal which was to be

built under contract by sections, and James was hankering to put one of his plows into that "canal prism," as Canvass White and the other engineers of the Erie Canal project called the strip of ground marked out with straight, white, barked willow poles from Rome to Utica. What a family to move! Maria Louisa was not yet a year old, but Harry, the eldest, was seventeen. In between were eight boys and girls with not more than two years between any two of them in the order of their arrival.

In January, 1817, James sold his farm to Thomas Foster for \$900 and moved to Camillus. In those days nine hundred dollars was a goodly sum, and evidently Mr. Foster did not have that much cash, for the deed recites: "This price is to be paid in neat stock (bulls and stags excepted), sheep, beef, grain, butter and cheese or either of said articles, at cash prices as the said James Mears shall choose, to be delivered on the premises sold by James to Thomas."

The new home was in that part of Camillus which was later set off to form the new town of Elbridge. It had a large house situated on the Seneca Turnpike, and contained five acres bordering the land and home of Timothy Brown. For the next thirty-six years it was to be the family homestead, enlarged from time to time, and filled to the brim with growing children. Later, as the five daughters married, this Elbridge home was always large enough in size and in welcome to gather in

for visits those of the family who could return to the fold for a reunion, and to provide refuge for those who, after bereavement, returned to the old house and the loving arms of James and Lois Mears.

B

Chapter VI

MOSTLY ENGINEERS

I

BY THE end of the second war with England, only thirty-two years after the close of the Revolution, settlers from New England and the other seaboard colonial settlements had taken up the most attractive lands of the central and western parts of the original states; but the spirit of pioneering was still strong among the people, and the westward call still worked its magic, not only on the rising generation but also on many a man and woman who had only recently moved from New England to what was then considered the West.

The Ohio River country, our first great Northwest, beckoned to all, from New England to the Carolinas; offering, along with its hardships and its new Indian troubles, the allurements of virgin lands and larger opportunity. Inland transportation routes were needed to reach these inviting but remote districts and to bring back the products of the land and the forest; and so, during the first half of the new century, improvement of the natural lanes of inland travel became the foremost consideration of the Federal Government and of some of the states.

As early as 1817 the optimism, financial skill, and

engineering ability of our young nation, responding to this imperative call for improved inland transportation, completed, as the first national transportation project, the great Cumberland Road, a highway from the waters of the Potomac at Cumberland to the waters of the Ohio at Wheeling. Over this first unit of our inland transportation system, which was at the zenith of its importance in 1820, great lumbering Conestoga wagons, drawn by six-horse teams and carrying some two tons of freight, made the trip from the seaboard to the Ohio in twenty days; and coaches carrying the United States mail raced, at what was then unprecedented speed, from Washington to Wheeling in four days' time.

The Mohawk Valley of New York was the theater of the next great inland transportation project, the Erie Canal—an enterprise of national importance, although undertaken and carried through by a single state. This canal, running almost straight east from Buffalo to the upper waters of the Mohawk River at Rome, was to follow the valley of that river to the waters of the Hudson above Albany, thus providing, by canal and river, a water route four hundred miles long between Lake Erie and the Atlantic. This was to be New York's route to the West, her answer to the Cumberland Road, and from 1809 to 1817, Governor DeWitt Clinton, with Robert Fulton, James Geddes, and others, labored for a realization of the ambitious plan.

The surveys and the actual excavation and construction work called for a large number of men with technical ability, and such men, especially those with experience in canal building, were very few. Benjamin Wright was made chief engineer of the project, and during 1816 the entire line from Buffalo to the Hudson was accurately surveyed with transit and level; the canal prism itself was staked out and the lock locations were fixed and tested both as to bearing power of the soil and the convenient location of building materials. On the surveys under Wright was Canvass White, a young man from Whitestown who was a grandson of Hugh White, the first settler. His boyhood was spent on his father's farm, and with the Poole and Root boys and girls of his generation, he attended the country school of the neighborhood until he was thirteen, when he entered Fairfield Academy to complete courses in mathematics, chemistry, mineralogy, and surveying.

At seventeen Canvass White had graduated and gone to work, but a temporary illness having sapped his strength, a sea voyage was recommended and he shipped as supercargo on an American merchantman bound for Russia. On the return voyage his captain put in at the port of Hull, in England, only to find that war had been declared, that his ship was a prize of war, and that the

crew were prisoners. White was later exchanged and in the spring of 1816 was made an assistant engineer and started his successful career. He was present in Rome when the first spadeful of earth was turned. Hudson Poole was undoubtedly inspired and helped by White, who was only a few years his senior. Both were from the same small town and of families that had been closely associated for two generations.

After excavation on the line of the Erie Canal was begun, Canvass White was sent to England by the Canal Commission to make a study of canals, locks, boats, and equipment. It is said that he traveled some two thousand miles afoot in carrying out his mission, and his report and recommendations shaped decisively the plans and specifications of the construction as well as the alignment of the canal at crucial points, especially on the stretch from Schenectady to the Hudson River. He spoke of his work as "rough and tumble engineering," the fatigues and exposures of which proved too great for him, for he died at the age of forty, soon after completion of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal.

When the Government was searching the country for the best man to appoint as chief engineer of this latter project, the eloquent Henry Clay, of Kentucky, said: "Get Canvass White; no man is more competent, no man more capable, and while your faith in his ability and fidelity increases, your friendship will grow into affection."

White bore no family relation to those with whom this narrative is concerned, but he sprang from the same New England stock, grew up in the same small neighborhood, received the same type of education as the other young engineers in whom we are more directly interested, and he must have been their close friend and, largely, their inspiration.

Porteus Root and Hudson Poole were first cousins and exactly of an age. As boys they had learned their three R's in the little one-room schoolhouse on Oriskany Hill. This slight elevation had the rather startling name of Louse Hill, and the boys called the little school Louse Hill Academy. Oriskany Creek ran through the valley, just below the school, and several generations of Whites, Roots, and Pooles learned swimming and "ducking" in its "swimmin' hole." Undoubtedly, Canvass White did most of the ducking, for he was older than the cousins.

In the printed report of the Erie Canal Commission for 1826, now in the New York Public Library, are listed the names of the principal employees, and there we find, among many others:

"Porteus Root, Asst. Engineer, Western Section."

"John H. Poole, jun. Superintendent of Construction."

3

From Staten Island came two brothers, John and Peter Martineau, to join the surveyors under Chief Engineer

Wright. Born at a time when the first Cornelius Vanderbilt was operating his little sailing schooner as a ferry from The Battery to Staten Island, they were educated young men and competent surveyors before Cornelius, Jr., afterwards called "The Commodore," got his own boat and a United States Government contract to carry supplies by water to all of the nine military posts in and about New York harbor. The Martineaus were of a family that came out from England to the colonies not long before the Revolution. It is believed they were descendants of the same Huguenot family which went to England from France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and from which Harriet Martineau, brilliant English author, who in 1836 wrote *Society in America* (a record of her impressions of American life and institutions), also was descended.

The Martineau brothers come first to our notice in 1824 in the little Mohawk Valley village of Amsterdam. Here they had joined the jolly group of young men and girls in the temporary home of James Mears, who, as his successive contracts on the canal moved toward Albany, had established himself for some years at this point to be nearer his work. The big house in Elbridge still was home, and to it most of the Mears family returned when the canal was finished and in full operation. Not all of the family returned to Elbridge, for Laura, the eldest daughter, had married her engineer, Daniel

Van Slyke; Eliza had married John Martineau, and Harriet Mears, as Mrs. Hudson Poole, continued to live with her engineer husband in Amsterdam.

Two others complete the list of these eight young engineers who were so close in age, in friendship, and in the work to which they had dedicated themselves, body and soul. David Hamilton, the youngest of the group, was born in Cherry Valley in 1804. He went up to Fairfield Academy to complete his education and then to start his work on the "Big Ditch." At Amsterdam he, too, joined the group; and after the canal was opened he married Hudson's younger sister, Sophia Poole, and went to live in Albany, where he built a fine house on the Troy Road, facing the canal and the long flight of locks he had built between Cohoes and Water-^{violet}town. He began as an engineer but soon became a contractor. Contracting for the state must have been a paying business, then, as now, for David Hamilton's house still stands, a fine colonial type with a pedimented portico and tall white columns. He survived the rough-and-tumble engineering and was appointed aide-de-camp on the staffs of Governors William C. Bouck and Silas Wright. The home of Colonel and Mrs. David Hamilton was one of the centers of social life in official Albany during the two decades before the Civil War.

The Colonel must have been an imposing person in those mid-years of his life. His nephew, DeWitt Clin-

FAMILY RECORD.

MARRIAGES.

James & Lois e Mears
were Married January
1st 1797. in

Laura Mears was
Married March 10th 1822
to Daniel Van Slyke

Channey Mears was
Married Dec 23rd 1823
to Mary Dean.

Eloza Mears was
Married April 29th 1824
to John Martineau

Harriet Mears was
Married June 23rd 1825
to John H Poole. Joshua Sherrin
2^d husband.

Mary H Mears
Married July 31st 1834
to Peter S. Martineau

MARRIAGES.

Laura Mears was
Married Oct 7th 1834
to Andrew Thompson

James K. Mears was
Married March 22 1836
Caroline Russell - Lois Newton

William I. Mears was
Married Dec 27 1837
to Caroline Ferguson. Jane Mearns

Charles S. Mears was
Married Oct 12 1840
to Lucretia Montineau, Harriet Anthony -

Maria Louisa Mears
Married Apr 13 1837
to Harvey Albrand.

ton Poole, remembered him well and prized highly the privilege of visiting his aunt and his uncle, and reading Shakespeare and Plutarch's Lives in their fine library. On one great occasion they took him to Saratoga Springs, where in the evening the family paraded the corridors of the United States Hotel—the Colonel, a large man, dressed in a blue broadcloth Prince Albert with brass buttons and fawn-colored trousers, with the three Hamilton girls, all beautifully gowned and coifed, grouped around him. It was an experience that made an indelible impression on a young man of twenty, on vacation from his first job.

Our list of young engineers ends with the magic name of DeWitt Clinton. This time, however, it is not the Governor but his son, DeWitt Clinton, Jr. An intimate friend of the group, he escaped the wiles of the Mears girls, and after the grand opening of the Erie, removed to New York City, where he became, for the brief remaining period of his life, one of the foremost consulting engineers of his time.

A letter which DeWitt Clinton, Jr., wrote to Daniel Van Slyke is still preserved:

New York, Dec. 26th 1829.

Dear Sir:

Your two letters from Georgetown I found in the post office, and I acknowledge the receipt of your draft for \$50 in the

first. I regret much that there should exist anything on your canal to render your duties unpleasant. But I should recommend to you as a sincere friend to do nothing in a *hurry*, reflect well before you determine on your course, as you may lose more than you possibly can gain, as a place is much easier given up than *found*.

I observe in the Pennsylvania papers that the Lower Division of the Juniata Canal has succeeded. You have visited that part lately and I understand think pretty well of the work generally,—will you therefore write me such information, respecting the work, as you may have obtained during your visit.

I cannot learn how our friend Clarke stands in public opinion at this time. Most probably you know more about it than I do, as the contractors from the Juniata must often visit your canal, and Poole I suppose writes to you frequently.

We have nothing new in New York. Canals are dull and the public mind is probably turning towards railroads and I am inclined to think very favorably of them. We have several projects of that kind in contemplation, and I may visit your city soon on that account,—as we probably will require the aid of Congress in carrying them into public notice.

Write to me soon and excuse my letter as I am in a great hurry.

Sincerely your friend

DeWitt Clinton

Daniel Van Slyke, Esq.,
Georgetown, D.C.

It was DeWitt Clinton, Jr., who obtained an engineer's billet for Daniel Van Slyke on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal construction, and he also helped Hudson

Poole to obtain a similar position on the Delaware and Hudson Canal.

4

When canal-building days were ended for James Mears, he went back to Elbridge with Lois and their sons and unmarried daughters. The old house on the Seneca Turnpike was enlarged and embellished with a built-in pipe organ, and a glass conservatory in which everything, including silkworms, was raised. Though not wealthy, as wealth was measured in New York State by a later generation, James Mears had prospered and was now accounted a man of means. State contracts had paid, and he and Lois, though never stinting themselves, had been diligent and thrifty. He even bought the adjoining farm for John and Eliza Martineau to use as a summer place when they came up from New York City.

John Martineau later became one of the principal engineers of the Croton River aqueduct project "for supplying the growing metropolis of New York with pure and unadulterated water," and in the final report of the Board of Water Commissioners is recorded this tribute to DeWitt's Uncle John: "To David B. Douglass and John Martineau esquires, civil engineers, the credit is due for designing the line of the aqueduct, by which the practicability of introducing the waters of the Croton River into New York City was placed beyond a doubt."

While the Mears girls were marrying mostly engineers, the boys of the family were growing to manhood and were soon of an age to start out into the world. Three of them were still unmarried and living with their parents when the family moved back to Elbridge. The eldest was James Rockwell, then came William Allen, and the youngest was Charles Sprague. Eventually all three went "West" to Madison, Wisconsin, and there became successful business men.

William A. Mears was for some years established in the Mohawk Valley town of Fultonville. He operated a grain mill and lived in a large stone house on the hill south of the Mohawk River and near the Dutch Reformed Church. Here it was that DeWitt's elder sister, Laura Mears Poole, went to live after her father's death and her mother's remarriage, and it was at her Uncle William's home that she was married, when she was nineteen years old. In later years she often amused her New York city-bred grandchildren by telling them that in her youth it was not considered modest for a girl to be on the street if the wind blew, and that Uncle William never permitted her to go for a walk when the day was windy.

When she was seventeen and had been living in Fultonville for several years, a young man named John Henry Starin took her for a sleigh ride on the frozen Mohawk River. On this ride he asked her to marry him



James Mears

but she refused. The next year, when he returned and proposed again, she accepted him, and it was Uncle William Mears who gave the bride away when they were married in 1846.

John Starin was of the old Dutch stock that came to New Amsterdam, directly from Holland, during the late years of the seventeenth century, and his forebears moved up into the Mohawk Valley long before the American Revolution. He was born in 1825 at Sammons ville, a small country village situated a few miles north of the Mohawk River where it flows between Fonda and Fultonville, which latter town his father, Myndert Starin, helped to found.

John was working in Fultonville when he married Laura Poole, and the young couple lived there for ten years. In 1856 he moved his business to New York City, and the difficulties met by him there, in shipping goods in and out of the growing metropolis, called his attention to the lack of system in handling freight between Manhattan Island and the mainland of New Jersey, as well as to and from "Up State" New York. Within three years of his arrival he had placed in operation a general freight agency and had laid the foundation of the great harbor transportation system that bore his name.

At first he used canal boats for moving freight about the harbor, but in a few years his organization developed the car float by which a freight train, having been broken

into sections, could be delivered in carload lots to any point in the harbor. He soon won the support and friendship of Commodore Vanderbilt, who realized that such a centralized system meant economy and increased efficiency for the newly formed New York Central Railroad, and other railroad connections followed.

He devised specialized facilities for handling the grain that came down the Erie Canal, and for transporting the coal that moved from Pennsylvania to the factories of New York State. In fact, as one biographer put it, "He built up the largest 'harbor marine' in the country, if not in the world."

Although his freight- and passenger-transportation lines were still in their infancy during the Civil War, the Federal Government relied largely on Starin and his organization for the movement of men, munitions, and supplies through this great Northern military base.

Hard work was not just his occupation; it was his joy in life, and he kept hard at it up to 1909, the year of his death. He represented his state in Congress, as his grandfather had done before him, and he played an important part in establishing New York's subway system. As a member of the original Rapid Transit Commission, he opposed the powerful financial interests that wanted to build more elevated and surface lines, and he fought hard for the subways. As vice president of the Commission, he saw construction on this great under-

ground transportation system begun early in June, 1900.

He was very successful and became a man of wealth and prominence in a day when the country was growing and such attainments were an honor before the people. His many civic and philanthropic activities are too numerous to mention here.

Near his old boyhood home at Fultonville he developed the beautiful estate called Starin Place, and it was there that DeWitt and his sister Laura enjoyed many reunions and family gatherings, prompted always by the deep affection between this brother and sister that continued through life.

When James and Charles Mears moved West they went by way of the Ohio River Valley, and New Albany, Indiana, was at one time their home. There it was that the Mears Brothers operated the store in which DeWitt Poole worked for a year on his way West. A city directory of New Albany for the year 1846 gives the address of the Mears store on Main Street, and of the home of James R. Mears on Pearl Street; it also records that his brother Charles was "living at the store."

Although Charles Sprague Mears was the youngest of the "Mears boys," he could recall a day in 1825 when, as a youngster, he had seen the Marquis de Lafayette in Elbridge as the distinguished Frenchman passed along the line of the Erie Canal during his last visit to America. The most memorable event of his young life occurred in

1836, while Charles was staying at Winant's Tavern in the Staten Island town of Port Richmond. He was awakened one night by calls for help from an adjoining room. Quickly slipping into his robe and slippers he went to the assistance of his neighbor and found an old and very sick man breathing his last upon the bed. Charles called for help and then soothed the sufferer as best he could until others arrived in the room.

• There were a few hurried words and an order for brandy. The labored breathing told those present that the end was near. Then a tired, feeble, and hardly audible voice whispered the word "Madame"—and all was still.

It was only after they had drawn the counterpane over the silent form and had left the room that Charles was told by the tavern keeper that the man who had just died was Aaron Burr, stormy petrel of early American public and international life, whose career had ended so ingloriously.

Chapter VII

THE HERMITAGE

I

ELIZA MEARS and John Martineau were married in June, 1824. Six months after their wedding they left Amsterdam for Alabama on "canaling business," as Eliza called it in the following letter, which she wrote to her parents from her new home:

Huntsville, November 8th, 1824.

Dear Father and Mother:

Two days since we arrived at this place after a long and tedious journey of about six weeks. You have undoubtedly received the letter directed to Harriet dated at Cincinnati, which informed you we were then waiting for the waters to rise, but finding no possibility of their being high enough to transport us as far as we intended to have gone (which was to Florence) we concluded to go as far as possible by water and the remainder by land.

We accordingly took the steamboat the next day for Louisville, a distance of about one hundred and eighty miles, and from thence we were obliged to hire hack at enormous prices for the distance of more than three hundred miles through a rough and dreary country, where the inhabitants were generally very indolent and therefore ignorant and rough in their appearance. We passed through many small villages where frequently the best tavern was made of logs and afforded but poor accommodations.

We stopped three days at Nashville where we had the superlative honor to dine with one of the candidates for the Presidency, Gen. Jackson. His address is easy and his countenance indicates strength and firmness of mind. The fourth day after we left Nashville we arrived at Huntsville where we found Peter, which afforded much pleasure I assure you after having so long been accustomed to see none but the faces of strangers. Huntsville as far as I have seen looks quite as well as I expected and the country around it much more so. In traveling one morning within a few miles of Huntsville we saw seven or eight deer feeding together in a meadow which to me was a very pleasing sight. I have become as healthy as you ever saw me.

Since we commenced our journey we have traveled in almost every sort of conveyance, sometimes going at the rate of one hundred and fifty miles a day and sometimes at eighteen. You might have sometimes imagined us fording large streams, at others wallowing through mud and jolting over the rocks, half starved and anxiously looking for some place where we might be accommodated with what was necessary, but were many times sadly disappointed.

We have plenty of Indian bread and sweet potatoes, which perfectly agrees with me as you would readily suppose were you to see me. The Huntsville bank a few days before our arrival was robbed of about thirty thousand dollars; the villain has not yet been detected.

I shall finish this by requesting an answer from some of the family as soon as received, for I am on tiptoe to hear what is passing in that part of the world which I still call my home altho we are about thirteen hundred miles from Amsterdam, half of which we traveled by land and by that means made our route much shorter and more fatiguing. I sometimes wish that Harriet were with us to add to our society of friends, but then

friend John supplies the deficiency of all absent, so that I am not discontented, altho I regret the loss of their society. John and Peter desire their love accompanied with my warmest affections. I subscribe myself your ever affectionate daughter,

Eliza Mears Martineau

P. S. They have not yet commenced their canaling business.

2

To be entertained by Rachel and Andrew Jackson must indeed have been a pleasant diversion as well as a "superlative honor" after the long journey of "more than three hundred miles through a rough and dreary country." "Old Hickory" was the nation's hero, acclaimed everywhere as personifying the spirit of the West. In 1824 the country was on the eve of a national election; and even as he greeted these young New Yorkers, Jackson must have been eagerly awaiting the verdict of the American people on his first candidacy for the office of president. He was then fifty-five years old, though looking ten years older. An impressive figure he must have been as he welcomed his guests to The Hermitage. His hair was almost white but still "bristling up like the crest of a hussar's helmet."

To the aristocratic North he may have seemed a crude backwoodsman, but that picture of him had been grossly overdrawn for political purposes. Not quite ten years had passed since he defeated the British at New Orleans, and nothing could dim the luster of his fame as the

deliverer of the South. Only a year ago he had gone up to Washington as a senator from Tennessee, and the capital had taken the bluff old campaigner to its heart. A cabal of politicians had been scheming to accomplish his defeat as a presidential candidate; but no matter what the financial and commercial powers along the Eastern seaboard might say of "Old Hickory," he had won the hearts of the women for his gallantry, and even sedate, conservative Mr. Webster, of Massachusetts, was thinking of voting for him.

It is regrettable that Eliza did not record something of the conversation which passed across the hospitable board at The Hermitage. Only five years before, the Jacksons had erected this house and moved into it from the old blockhouse of hewn overhead joists and punch-con floor, in which they had lived since 1804, and in which Aaron Burr, at the beginning of his ill-starred conspiracy, had called on Jackson and misled him as to the plan to seize Louisiana, in concert with Spain, and to divide the Union.

It was at The Hermitage that Thomas Hart Benton, then a young lawyer but later to become a senator from Missouri, often dined after joining the local militia company of General Jackson's division; and many others to whom fame was beckoning had gathered there. One of them was Sam Houston, but the Texan's great victory at San Jacinto was still twelve years away. Doctor

James Bronaugh, duelist, *beau sabreur*, and physician to Jackson, was another. He is now all but forgotten, but in 1824 he was a colorful figure in Tennessee, as was Judge John Overton, who acted as Jackson's second in his celebrated duel with Charles Dickinson. As the Martineaus tarried at frontier taverns on their journey southward, they must have heard many stories of the men whom Jackson had entertained at The Hermitage; and to be there on the eve of one of the most stirring elections in history was something long to be remembered by Eliza.

We can only guess at what was said. Certain it is, though, that the name of DeWitt Clinton was mentioned. Clinton had been talked of as a possible presidential candidate but had not entered the contest. It is more than likely that John Martineau carried with him a letter of introduction from Clinton himself; for the Governor's son, DeWitt Clinton, Jr., was another of these young "canalers" and a friend of the Martineaus and of Hudson Poole. What more natural than that young Clinton should have prevailed upon his father to furnish a letter of introduction for these newlyweds to present at The Hermitage? How else could a young and unknown engineer, with no claim on Jackson's time, have been bidden at such an important hour to dine with the most-talked-of man of the day?

To the Martineaus, as to the Pooles, Governor Clin-

ton was a hero, not only because of his public service but also because of the enemies he had made. Although Jackson and Clinton had never met, each respected the other, and "Old Hickory" had borne testimony to his high regard for the Empire State's chief executive. The trip Jackson made to the North in 1819 had been a triumphant series of receptions from the day he left Nashville. In Philadelphia, at a dinner given in his honor by a large group of citizens, he briefly thanked the people, and raising his glass offered the toast: "To the memory of Benjamin Franklin."

A few days later, in New York, he was given the freedom of the city, and at a banquet in Tammany Hall, whose leaders were supporters of William H. Crawford, Jackson offered a toast to DeWitt Clinton. In the very citadel of the anti-Clintonites, that was a courageous as well as a gracious tribute. A lesser man would have counted the cost to his political future; but Jackson was made of firmer stuff. As Eliza sat there in the presence of the man who electrified the country by his defeat of the British, no wonder she was impressed by the weather-beaten face and thought that "his countenance indicates strength and firmness of mind."

Election day fell on the second of November in that year, and the result was still in doubt when Eliza wrote her letter home. It would remain in doubt until February, for there had been no majority, and the contest was

to be settled in the House of Representatives. Although he had received the most votes in the election, Jackson was to be defeated when the Clay and Crawford men swung their support to John Quincy Adams. But for John and Eliza Martineau in the after years there were to remain vivid pictures of a memorable day at The Hermitage. And there was something of prophecy, too, in what "Old Hickory" had said. With two Northerners at his table, it is likely that Jackson repeated what he had just written: "The Missouri Compromise . . . will be the entering wedge to separate the Union. . . . I hope I may not live to see the evils that must grow out of this wicked design of demagogues who talk about humanity but whose sole object is self-aggrandizement."

Eliza would not live to hear it, and Jackson, John Martineau, and Hudson Poole would be in their graves, but DeWitt Clinton Poole and his generation would be answering Lincoln's call for volunteers to put down rebellion, the country would be torn asunder, and the North and the South would be facing each other in a death struggle to preserve the Union. But in Nashville, in 1824, only a prophet could hear the distant sound of bugles blowing.

Chapter VIII

THE WEDDING OF MARY MEARS

I

TEN summers had come and gone, but it seemed only the other day that all the young "canalers" were at the Mears home in Amsterdam to attend the wedding of John and Eliza. Time had wrought many changes since that day, and now John's brother Peter Martineau was in Elbridge, marrying Eliza's sister Mary.

The lilacs drooped under the noon heat of that July day in 1834, as Mary and Peter stood before the altar in the little village church. After the ceremony the wedding party joined a host of friends at the Mears home on the Seneca Turnpike. In the group were many members of the family, who, ten years before, had witnessed the marriage of Eliza and John Martineau, and who, a year later, had seen Harriet Mears marry Hudson Poole.

"I've had three daughters married before, but this is the biggest family gathering yet," Mother Mears was saying. "And all of us living right here in New York State and able to foregather in the sight of the Lord. But something tells me it won't be long that way."

"There are those children at my cookie-jar again. Nap Van Slyke, why don't you behave? You are the oldest, and Heaven knows you should act more becoming."



Mary Mears Martineau

Laura Poole, you and DeWitt go out on the porch and stay there a bit, and be careful not to wake your sister Nettie. She's asleep in her crib."

DeWitt's grandparents are the oldest in the gathering, for John Hudson Poole is sixty-eight and Esther Poole is sixty-one. With them has come their daughter Sally, already forty and not married—quite the "old maid" of the family, as she always remained.

Laura Mears Van Slyke is there, pale but lovely, and still wearing her widow's weeds. Her husband, Daniel Van Slyke, had died a few years before, leaving Laura and their nine-year-old son, to whom the young couple had given the resounding name of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Jesse Root Poole and David Hamilton, young men of about thirty, are soon romping with their nephews and nieces. A jolly crowd the gathering has become, now that the solemn ceremony at the church has been performed and the families have gathered under the Mears roof.

The youngsters warrant a roll call, for many who hear the names in later years will mark one or more of them as parent or grandparent, as aunt or uncle. Uncle Jesse lines up this Mohawk Valley army of boys and girls. Now he calls their names:

"Henrietta Martineau! How old are you, Henrietta?"

"Nine, Uncle Jesse."

"Napoleon Bonaparte Van Slyke!"

"Please just call me 'Nap,' Uncle Jes," the boy re-

sponds almost pleadingly. "I'm twelve, but, jimminy crickets, that name's too long."

"Never mind, Nap, you bear the name of a great soldier who still lives in the memory of the whole world, and don't ever forget that your great-grandfather, John Van Slyke, fought at Oriskany. Now, who's next?"

"Laura Poole, how old are you, and does your brother DeWitt know his age?"

"Yes, I think he does, Uncle Jesse. I'm eight and he's only five, going on six."

"Well, Laura, who are these last two in the line?"

"Oh, that's Jimmy Martineau, and that's my little sister, Mary 'Liz'beth Poole. Mary's just a baby; she's only three but Jimmy is just DeWitt's age."

The roll call is interrupted. James Mears is speaking now: "Mr. Poole, won't you and Esther take a glass of punch? It's just the lemonade that Lois makes, but there's a spot of Jamaica in it today to suit the occasion."

"Thanks, Mr. Mears. We'll touch a glass with you on Mary's wedding day; but I never forget that old jingle of my father's time: 'There's naught so good for youthful blood as pure and sparkling water.' "

"O, Lois! Come over here, my dear, and join us. A Poole, a Root, a Sprague, and a Mears—we've all come to this country from afar, we old folks, and now the young people are startin' to scatter like a covey of birds in the fall o' the year."

"Jim, there's been a heap o' changes in this valley since I came up the river with my father from down East."

"When was that, Mr. Poole?"

"Spring o' seventeen eighty-eight. My father never liked it on Nantucket. He wanted to come West when old King George's ships left New York in '83, but he couldn't have sold out then, except he was willin' to take scrip."

"Well, you were ten years ahead of me; but when Lois and I came in from Vermont there wa'n't one stick on top of another when we passed Uticky—only old John Bellinger's cabin."

"Yes, Jim, and it was all o' two years after that before we got the bridge done, and then, before we knew it, Uticky was a town. There's been a lot o' changes and too many people've come in since then. Why, one winter alone better'n two thousand span o' oxen came up the valley from Albany—yoked to sleighs and sledges filled with women and children, and the men drivin' their loose stock alongside."

"Well, Lois and I have had thirty happy years here, and I reckon we'll stay. I don't know, though. Our boys James and William are a-talkin' and kind o' dreamin' already about the West."

"That's what you men dug Clinton's Big Ditch for, wa'n't it—to take the people West and to haul back the grain? And now you're not satisfied with that. Jim, I

hear there's talk o' building a railroad to run from Uticky to Si-racuse. They claim they can outhaul the canal."

"Maybe they can, at that—for speed, anyhow—that is if they don't break down. But the old Erie, she's reliable, and she'll be a-takin' people West and a-haulin' grain down East long after you and I are gone, Mr. Poole."

2

His mother having remarried after the death of his father in 1835, DeWitt Poole had gone to live with his grandparents on the Poole farm at Oriskany. This arrangement was made to please the aging John Hudson Poole, to whom the death of his own son at so early an age had brought profound sorrow. He saw in the youngster many traits of Hudson Poole, and the two formed a rare companionship that left an indelible impression on the mind of the sensitive boy.

DeWitt spent a part of each summer with his mother, in Jordan; and inasmuch as she and her second husband, Joshua Sherwin, were frequent visitors at the Poole farm, there was no real separation of mother and son. In his grandfather's home he lived the life of a country boy of the times, doing the morning and evening chores for the household, helping to plant in the spring, and piling wood in the shed for the winter days and nights when a fire would be kept burning in the huge kitchen fireplace. Winter mornings, after the chores

were done, he trudged through the snow to the little country school on the hill between the farm and the village of Oriskany. DeWitt had an alert mind, was an inveterate reader, and remembered what he read.

During the six years he lived with his grandfather, he developed the fine physique and robust health which were to serve him with hardly a day's illness almost to his ninetieth year. By the time he was fourteen he was able to do a man's work about the farm. Although of only medium stature when a man, he never knew the meaning of fatigue.

After his grandfather died in 1842, DeWitt went to live in Elbridge with his maternal grandparents, James and Lois Mears, and there, in the old red-brick Munro Academy, along with Nap Van Slyke, Timothy Brown, and Laura Sheldon, he rounded out his formal education.

Both DeWitt and his cousin Napoleon Van Slyke worked for a livelihood during the years of their final schooling, but they had occasional vacations along with their work and study, and one summer, when they were well-grown boys, they took a trip down the St. Lawrence River. That was the year in which Morse's magnetic telegraph was first installed in central New York. The two boys, who were more like brothers than cousins, often told in later years how, after they had sent a telegram home as an experiment, they wrote their grandfather to ask if it had really arrived.

DeWitt remained in Elbridge until, at the age of eighteen, he found employment in a store at Albany. There, he was frequently invited to the home of his uncle David Hamilton, then one of Albany's successful business men. In the library of the Hamilton home, on the old Troy road, DeWitt was given the privilege of reading and of borrowing any book he wanted to take for closer study. He made good use of this opportunity, and, in later life, always referred to it with feelings of great appreciation.

While DeWitt was living in Elbridge his Aunt Mary Martineau made several visits home, and the eighteen-year-old boy was thrilled to hear from her of the opportunities in the West and of Uncle Peter's adventures there. Then, when he was in Albany, many letters from his uncles, who were in New Albany, were circulated among those at home, and the accounts of life in Indiana further fired his imagination and strengthened his determination to go. He worked hard and lived frugally, putting aside for the adventure every dollar it was possible for him to save from a very meager week's pay.

"Go West, young man, and grow up with the country," was the slogan of the day, and every year young people, whose own families had come west from New England to New York, were leaving for the Ohio Valley and for Michigan and Wisconsin.

In 1851 DeWitt's youngest sister, Henrietta, mar-

ried Charles Fillmore and moved to northern Illinois. The next year Mary Elizabeth married Norman Stewart, and they went to Wisconsin. Naturally, DeWitt and Nap Van Slyke were keen to start, and the following spring they joined the westward trek, Nap going directly to Madison and DeWitt making New Albany his first stopping point—and this for a very practical reason: he needed to raise money both for his expenses on the trip and for a “stake” with which to set himself up in Madison.

Chapter IX

LAND OF THE FOUR LAKES

I

IN VERY early days, when all of Canada was a French colony, travel routes followed the natural waterways. To reach the country of the Great Lakes and the valley of the Mississippi from Canada, missionaries and traders traced the old Indian canoe route from Montreal up the Ottawa River to Lac Iroquois. This beautiful sheet of water, now named Georgian Bay, was easily accessible, with only one short portage. In the fair-weather half of the year it was a pleasant trip from Lac Iroquois to Mackinac Island and from there on to Green Bay in the country of the Winnebagos.

At some time in those early days a tribal group of Indians, known as Sauks, or Sacs, inhabited the country north of Lake Ontario. Na-na-ma-ke was chief of the Sacs and, according to tribal lore, he had met a white man in the vicinity of Montreal, who had come from the King of France to be their White Father. He had presented Na-na-ma-ke with a medal, placing it around the chief's neck as a symbol of friendship for the tribe. He also gave Na-na-ma-ke a shirt, a blanket, and a variety of other presents, and told him to bring some of his people

to a council. This was done, and when the conference was concluded their new-found friend gave them guns, powder, lead, and a new kind of knife with which to chastise their enemies in time of war, and with which in time of peace to kill buffalo, deer, and other game necessary for the simple comforts of life.

The French White Father continued for a long time to keep up a regular trade with the Sacs, they giving him furs and pelts in exchange for his goods. A day came, however, when other white people made war on the French, driving them away from Quebec and taking possession of it for themselves. All the tribes of Indians surrounding the Sacs were much disturbed, and there was fighting among the several groups that had taken part in the white man's war. The Sacs were driven westward as far as Lac Iroquois and then to the island of Mackinac, where they first met their British White Father.

Mackinac and the neighboring islands were too small to maintain the tribe, so the Sacs pushed on to the Green Bay country, where they made a village and entered into a treaty of friendship and alliance with the Foxes. But the Sacs and Foxes together were not strong enough to hold this country. Enemies from the north pressed in on them, so the two tribes, which had now become one band, moved farther west. From Green Bay they pushed on across the inland lakes and up the rivers, portaging their canoes at last over a short stretch of flat country

to a river which they were told was called the *Ouisconsin*. To the south they found a glorious virgin land. A happy hunting ground it became to them, and there they lived, in the Land of the Four Lakes.

2

Within the same twelvemonth that Ruth Hudson's boy, John Hudson Poole, was born in the Massachusetts town of Dighton, an Indian boy was born in the Sac village at the mouth of Rock River. Although he was a lineal descendant of Na-na-ma-ke, the boy was not allowed to paint or wear feathers until his fifteenth year, when, being with his father in a fight with the Osages, he wounded one of the enemy and was, consequently, placed among the ranks of the braves as Ma-ka-tai-me, which means "black hawk." In a war with the Cherokees, his father was killed and Black Hawk became chief of the Sacs and Foxes, at a time when Spain still held Louisiana and claimed control of the Mississippi from its mouth to the Falls of St. Anthony.

Events now succeeded one another with startling rapidity. In Europe, Napoleon Bonaparte, emperor of the French, had placed his brother Joseph on the throne of Spain, and in star-chamber session the diplomatists of these two countries decided that Spain should retrocede Louisiana to France—only to be used subsequently by Napoleon as a pawn in the great game of international



IN THE LAND OF THE FOUR LAKES

*From a painting by James R. Stuart
owned by the Wisconsin Historical Society*

chess in which he was so desperately involved. The "Little Corporal" made the next play, and with his steel-blue eyes fixed on Albion he moved his pawn to block the foe in the New World. Thus Louisiana, or roughly the whole Mississippi Valley, was sold to the United States.

3

"This news made me and my people exceedingly sad," said Black Hawk, "because we had always heard bad accounts of the Americans from Indians who had lived near them."

The energetic Americans naturally began pushing up the river, and unfortunate incidents soon occurred. An Indian, having killed an upriver American, was captured and taken to St. Louis for trial. Black Hawk sent four of his head men to St. Louis to intercede, in the hope that by paying blood money he could free the prisoner, this being the only way the Indians knew of saving a person who had killed another. The party was absent for a long time but finally returned to the Sac village, each member dressed in a blue coat and wearing a medal about his neck. Early next morning in the crowded council lodge, Quash-Quami, leader of the party, gave the following account of the mission:

"On our arrival at St. Louis we met our American Father and explained to him our business, urging the release of our friend. The American Chief told us he

wanted land. We agreed to give him some on the west side of the great river, likewise some on the Illinois side. When the business was all arranged we expected to have our friend released to come home with us. About the time we were ready to start our brother was let out of the prison. He started to run but when he had gone a short distance he was shot dead."

That was all they could remember except that they had been given many presents, had been very drunk, and had touched the quill to a writing. Thus, so the Indians claimed, the Treaty of 1804 had been signed and the Sacs and Foxes were thenceforth under treaty agreement not to live or hunt east of the Mississippi. That paradise between the Rock and the Wisconsin rivers was gone.

So the years rolled by, some better, some worse; and every year white people were moving up the river and taking up the virgin land.

The annuity goods which were due the Indians under the treaty, even when they arrived, had been poor and unsatisfactory. Salt beef, some of it very old and spoiled—ugh! it stunk. Coffee! Who could eat those hard green beans? The squaws had boiled them for hours, at last putting some deer meat in with them and boiling them longer. No one could eat the mess, and when it was thrown out on the ground, even the dogs wouldn't touch it. Hunting on the west bank of the Mississippi and up the Iowa rivers was not good, for the Sioux were press-

ing down from the north. Still the years rolled by, and every year more white people were moving up the river and settling on both sides.

In the spring of 1832 Black Hawk, then sixty-five years old, decided to lead his people up the Rock River once more. Treaty or no treaty, they would go to plant a summer crop with their friends the Winnebagos; they would stay for the fall hunt in the Land of the Four Lakes, and then retrace the old, well-known trail to spend the winter again in the land of exile. It would be no war party. The old men, the women, and the children should go, but the fighting men would be fully armed.

Strange messengers had arrived in Black Hawk's village during the preceding winter, coming from tribes who lived in the country to the north and the east, and bringing tempting but dangerous suggestions. Perhaps the Indian people might wish to act together. The Sioux were interested and the Winnebagos sent word that a British agent was in Milwaukee. Very likely their British Father would help them now, as they had helped him in 1812. They would not attack, but if they were interfered with they knew what to do. The country east of the great river had been home to them these many years, and then—that idea of the British Father's helping to bring back the old days was very tempting. Black Hawk decided to take his old, silk British flag along—just in case it might be needed.

The fatal move began, and by mid-April the Indians were well up Rock River despite the fact that General Henry Atkinson, who commanded the Federal garrison at Rock Island, had sent several runners to Black Hawk with warnings that he must turn back and recross the Mississippi.

When Atkinson learned that his orders were not being obeyed, a general alarm was spread throughout the territory. The governor of Illinois issued a call for volunteers, and soon a large but poorly organized force was moving up Rock River, with no particular plan in mind other than to follow the Indians and to protect the country from possible attack. One of the captains in this regiment of Illinois Volunteers was a young man named Abraham Lincoln, from Sangamon County.

The commander of the Illinois Volunteers decided to send a force of three hundred mounted men under Major Stillman, to keep close contact with the Indians, and this battalion moved to a position only a few miles from Black Hawk's camp. The old chief sent three of his young men with a white flag to ask for a council. Again that fatal hand of misunderstanding played its part. The three Indians with the flag of truce were taken prisoners and hurried into camp, where, before explanations could be made, the flag-bearer was shot and instantly killed, while his comrades escaped during the confusion. Thus Black Hawk's War began.

Black Hawk could not go back down Rock River after he was attacked by Stillman, so he moved his people upstream into Wisconsin, where he had a short respite in the region of the Four Lakes, while the Americans were waiting for Atkinson's regulars to come up with their field guns and ammunition. He then moved northwestward to the banks of the Wisconsin, where, having hurried the women and children forward, he made a gallant stand against a superior force, to gain time for his noncombatants to reach the Mississippi.

Then fighting a fine rear-guard action, with heavy losses in killed and wounded, he and his braves retreated to the banks of the river which they thought meant safety for them; but there they were overwhelmed. When the miserable remnant of half-starved and defeated Indians, old and young, women and children, had crossed to the west bank of the Mississippi, at a point about thirty miles above Prairie du Chien, Black Hawk put up a white flag of surrender and the "war" was over.

Well treated by the Government, the broken old chief lived until 1838, but what was left of the Sacs and Foxes never again crossed the forbidden river, and all the land lying south and east of the Wisconsin to Green Bay became United States territory, open to settlement.

Four years later, by act of Congress, the Territory of Wisconsin was established, embracing within its boundaries not only the present state, but also large areas now

included in Iowa, Minnesota, and the Dakotas. General Henry Dodge, who had played an important part in the recent fighting with the Indians, was appointed governor.

The much-beloved Judge James Doty, as a circuit judge, had made frequent journeys on horseback through the country between Green Bay and Mineral Point, and it was he who selected, as the site for the new territorial capital, the isthmus between the two larger of the four lakes which the Indians had named Mendota, Monona, Waubesa, and Kegonsa.

James Madison, of Virginia, fourth President of the United States, died during the first year of Wisconsin's governmental history. That year her first territorial legislature met by proclamation of Governor Dodge in the little village of Belmont, and as an honor to the deceased President, it was resolved and ordered that the name of their yet unborn capital, soon to come into life on the beautiful site selected by Judge Doty, should be Madison.

4

With the following journalistic flourish, characteristic of the time, the editor of the *Daily State Journal* recorded, on a morning in May, 1854, the arrival of the first train of the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad in the town of Madison:

Never was a day more auspicious. The heavens were cloudless, the air warm but not sultry, and the golden floods of sun-

light, the wide landscape of lake and forest and prairie which forms the charming environment of our village, was like a bright-eyed face that laughs out openly. We trust that this is an omen of the success and future prosperity of the railroad and the enterprising, public-spirited men under whose auspices it has been thus far steadily pushed forward.

For some years the project to build a railroad from Milwaukee as far west as the Mississippi had been under way, and the "auspicious" day had come. In many ways it was not unlike the day in 1825, when Governor DeWitt Clinton, of New York, officiated at the grand opening of the Erie Canal, and Hudson Poole and his bride stood on a wharf at Albany, to see the "Seneca Chief" leading the first barges that passed down the Erie Canal from the lakes to the sea.

An excited throng of villagers and countryfolk had gathered early in the morning to witness an event that would be an important one in their lives, for many in the crowd had moved West ten or fifteen years before and had never seen a locomotive engine. By ten o'clock the streets were filled with teams, and the wooden sidewalks were crowded with men, women, and children, all eager to see the "iron horse" that was to mark the beginning of a new era for the capital of Wisconsin.

The train did not arrive until two o'clock, and many of the people had grown impatient when, suddenly, all were thrilled, and not a few were awed, by the shriek of a locomotive whistle as the long train swept majestically

into sight. At the rear of the many coaches were flat cars carrying the Milwaukee Volunteer Fire Brigade in gay red uniforms, and with glittering engine and sleek hose reel. A small piece of artillery had been brought along by the hook-and-ladder company, and, as the white powder-smoke from each discharge of the cannon cleared away, tumultuous applause echoed and re-echoed across Lake Monona as a welcome to the visitors. It was a grand but strange spectacle, according to the *editor of the Journal*, "the most magnificent and huge, unheard-of thing of life, with breath of smoke and flame emerging from the green openings—scenes of pastoral beauty and quietude—beyond the waters of Lake Monona."

Mingling with the crowds was DeWitt Clinton Poole, who had come to Madison that spring. Having saved enough money from his job in Uncle Charlie's store to undertake the trip, he had traveled by stagecoach from New Albany, through old Vincennes, to Chicago, then by the new Chicago and Galena Railroad to Janesville. There his cousin, Napoleon Van Slyke, met him, and the last fifty miles to Madison were covered by horse and buggy. DeWitt's uncles, James and William Mears, were already well established businessmen of Madison, and his cousin Nap, who had arrived the year before in the town of the Four Lakes, was laying the foundation of his long career as a banker.

In the office of the Register of Deeds of Dane County is a volume recording the fact that on May 19, 1854, Napoleon B. Van Slyke and his wife, Laura, deeded certain Wisconsin lands to DeWitt Clinton Poole. The day the deed was officially recorded was the day after the "monster train, like some huge, unheard-of thing of life," came steaming into Madison.

In the intervening twenty years since Mary Mears had been married in Elbridge, the Poole and Mears families had been widely scattered. Laura and Eliza were dead; Charles and James Mears had married, had settled first in New Albany and then in Madison; and the Peter Martineaus had established themselves in Milwaukee, after ten years of overland moves. In Elbridge, James and Lois Mears, now well past the meridian of life, had sold their house on the Seneca Turnpike and were breaking up the old home and going West to be with Mary and her husband, or with the larger family group in Madison.

For years Mary had kept a diary as she moved from place to place with her husband in his engineering work. During most of the year 1837 they had been in Virginia, making their headquarters at Fredericksburg, where Peter was in charge of the canalization of the Rappahannock. In April, Mary set out for Elbridge to visit her parents and sisters, but was back again in Fredericksburg by mid-July. In her diary for October 12 she wrote: "Expect soon to leave this place for the Far West."

Two days later they left for New Albany, Indiana, where they arrived November 8. On a visit home again in 1840, her accounts of the western county so intrigued her brother Charles that he would have returned with her then had he not been engaged to marry Peter's niece Lucretia Martineau, a young girl dying of tuberculosis.

Early in 1842, at Bloomington, Indiana, the diary kept by DeWitt's Aunt Mary Martineau records: "Came here early in July to live until the public works are resumed. As my husband's funds are in state scrip, which is not of much value, he has turned merchant in this place"; and then, wistfully, "I am now thirty years old, ah how old!"

In 1842 James and Charles Mears moved to New Albany, after the death of Lucretia, and there they opened a general store. Mary went to see them, traveling the entire distance of ninety miles on horseback. "I like that way of traveling here," was her brief comment on the journey. Pulling up stakes and moving had been the usual experience with Mary and Peter. In the spring of 1844 they were moving to Indianapolis, and at Martinsville, Indiana, April 10, she jotted in her journal: "So far on our way, wherever it may be. The day has been pleasant and we travelled in a light wagon with a cover, in which were our three trunks and skins to make a couch to recline upon when I choose." Two days later, without identifying the village they had reached, she made a longer entry:

Have had such rough roads as to take the romance out of our primitive way of travelling. I thought I should walk and pick flowers and, perhaps, stop and cook a meal under the shade of the trees, à la Gipsy, but our great desire is to be carried over the wretched roads without sinking in the mire. Today M. had to make a rude bridge of poles and unharness the horses, lead one while I did the other, over it, then fasten a rope to the wagon and draw it through the dangerous little stream. When we reached our wayside inn we laughed and were so merry over our exploits that our landlady thought we were a little too anxious to get through their neighborhood, suspected us to be no other than a runaway couple—I a boarding-school miss, perhaps—and came, in all curiosity and begged me to confess the same. I asked her how many children she had and she said four; then I told her I suspected her to be as young a woman as I, and so it proved, though she fancied me quite a girl owing, I suppose, to my gay manner and becoming dress.

In Indianapolis, on the Sunday after their arrival, they attended church service “to hear Mr. Gurley notwithstanding all said Henry Ward Beecher was the great preacher.” But while Mary was comparing preachers Peter was wondering what he should do, now that there was no immediate prospect of another engineering job. Together they discussed the problem and it was decided that he should buy a stock of goods and open a store in a new town in Wisconsin.

In the late autumn, after a brief visit with the family in Elbridge, they went by lake steamer from Buffalo to Racine, but before the close of the year Peter had decided that anything would be preferable to the life of a

merchant in a Wisconsin frontier town. An unexpected turn of events is told in a brief entry in Mary's journal on January 2, 1846:

Milwaukee—came here in a covered wagon. Today have been to church. Mr. M. has exchanged his store in Racine for land near Milwaukee and I am glad to be free from the goods as I have never liked such pursuits for M.

Peter, it appears, made no mistake in swapping his store for the land, for within a few years the acreage was in the heart of the best residential section of the growing town, and his sale of it by subdivisions yielded a handsome return.

This change in the fortunes of Peter and Mary is modestly recorded by two entries in her diary: "We have a prospect of becoming quite rich as a company of gentlemen offer M. \$136,000 for a part of his land. I am afraid to be the possessor of such a fortune as the responsibilities are so great"; and, a few months later: "We have now become rich and own a delightful home of our own. My parents spent three months and returned to Madison, where the largest number of children are settled. I have received more attentions than ever, owing to our reported wealth, still I distrust that peace that the world gives. If much is given much is also required of me."

When DeWitt Clinton Poole arrived in Madison in the spring of 1854, Black Hawk had been dead only sixteen years. Middle-aged men then living in and about

the Four Lakes region, who had settled there after Black Hawk's War, when Wisconsin had been made a territory, remembered the old chief and reminisced on the events of 1832 as if they had occurred but yesterday. DeWitt knew some of them and heard their firsthand accounts of the long, hard march of these citizen soldiers who had come up from Illinois with a future President among them.

Chapter X

LOWERING CLOUDS

I

IN THE spring of 1832 an obscure young law student had issued an address to the people of Sangamon County in support of his candidacy for the Illinois legislature. Known only in New Salem and its vicinity, Abraham Lincoln was at the moment out of work and penniless. "I was born, and have ever remained, in the most humble walks of life," his printed handbill announced. "I have no wealthy or popular relatives or friends to recommend me. . . . My case is thrown exclusively upon the independent voters of the county." If they should elect him he would do his best to merit their confidence. "But if the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined."

Then of a sudden something happened to focus the attention of the people of Sangamon County upon the little-known candidate. Black Hawk and his warriors were on Illinois territory, and as a member of the state militia Lincoln promptly enlisted for thirty days' field service, was elected captain of his company, and set out

to meet the "enemy." When the month had expired Governor John Reynolds urged all the men to re-enlist for an additional twenty days. "I was out of work, and there being no danger of more fighting, I could do nothing better than enlist again," Lincoln frankly told William H. Herndon, his law partner of Springfield, many years later.

On May 27, 1832, he was again mustered into service by young Lieutenant Robert Anderson of the Third United States Artillery, who nearly thirty years afterward, as Major Robert Anderson, was to become a dramatic figure when the bombardment of Fort Sumter ushered in the Civil War.

An additional thirty days completed Lincoln's service, and, without having engaged in a battle, without having fired a shot, without even having seen an Indian, he had gone home to New Salem with money in his pocket to resume his campaign for the legislature.

There were men living in Madison in 1854 who remembered the tall, gaunt, sun-tanned captain from the prairies who had wrestled and boxed better than any man among them, who had told stories and cracked jokes at night around the campfires, and who had played cards with them by day when ranks were broken for a rest as they pushed their way north. DeWitt had himself heard of Lincoln, who was again riding the circuit after having returned in 1850 from a single term in

Congress. "Honest Abe," his friends had been calling him ever since his New Salem days, and DeWitt would soon be hearing more of this leader of the Western Whigs and reading the celebrated Lincoln-Douglas debates.

In the summer of 1856 "D. C. Poole's dry goods and crockery store" was listed by the *State Journal* as one of the stores in Capitol Square, along with that of James R. Mears, who had come to Madison from New Albany and, four years earlier, was accounted one of the city's prominent merchants. DeWitt had set up for himself and was doing a good business, his store being quite a gathering place after business hours for his fellow members of the local military company, called the Governor's Guard.

2

In Watertown, about forty miles from Madison, there had recently arrived a young German immigrant not yet thirty years old. He was Carl Schurz, whose exploits as a German revolutionist in the revolt of 1848 had made him a local celebrity among the German population because of his fame in rescuing Gottfried Kinkel, a comrade in arms, from the penitentiary at Spandau. Coming to America in 1852, he had lived precariously in New York and Philadelphia while studying English, and with his parents, wife, and sisters had migrated to Watertown early in 1855. His rise in American politics, especially among his German compatriots, was rapid and, having

joined the Republican party, he took an active part in support of the presidential candidacy of John C. Frémont, "The Pathfinder." It was at this time, when Schurz first spoke in Madison, that DeWitt saw and heard the erstwhile Prussian revolutionary, then editing the Watertown *Deutsch Volks-Zeitung*. Two years later Schurz was nominated by the Republicans for lieutenant governor of the state, and his most notable speech of the campaign was delivered in the Court House at Madison.

DeWitt and a group of friends were in the audience, eager to hear the tall, ungainly, bespectacled young man deliver a telling blow against slavery and to plead the cause of the Republican party which had been organized the previous year at Ripon, only a few miles from the state capital. Although DeWitt was interested in discussions of public affairs and was strong for the Union, one and inseparable, he was not greatly moved by the antislavery agitation, and had taken it for granted that some sort of compromise between North and South would avert such a tragedy as civil war. Down in Illinois Abraham Lincoln was saying the same thing and would have occasion to deal with the subject more fully when he met the "Little Giant" on the hustings.

3

On a March day in 1854, Mary Mears Martineau wrote in her journal: "This has been quite an exciting day here

in Milwaukee, owing to the recapture of a fugitive slave." The slave, whose name was Joshua Glover, had been seized under the provisions of the Fugitive Slave Law, and Byron Paine, a rising young attorney, volunteered to defend those who had aided Glover to escape from his bondage through the "Underground Railroad." The case became a *cause célèbre* that stirred the whole state. Two years after his Madison speech Carl Schurz was advocating Byron Paine's election to the Supreme Court of Wisconsin. Paine's candidacy was really a test between slavery and antislavery sentiment. He won a sweeping victory and took his seat upon the bench.

How little did DeWitt, leading the life of a gay young bachelor, realize that events were to shape themselves with such lightning-like rapidity during those four eventful years between 1857 and 1861! As he sat listening to Schurz, who had been less than five years a naturalized citizen, he could not foresee what the future held for Schurz and for himself.

Less than nine years after his arrival in this country with only a smattering of English, Schurz was to be appointed Minister to Spain by President Lincoln, while DeWitt was to become an officer of volunteers, answering Lincoln's first call for 75,000 men to preserve and protect the Union. Schurz's career is well known to history: how he raised a regiment of German-Americans for the Union; how he removed from

Wisconsin to St. Louis and became a United States senator from Missouri; how he became Secretary of the Interior in the cabinet of President Hayes; and how, following an independent course in politics thereafter, he became a force in varied reform movements and led the fight for nation-wide Civil Service. Although they never met, DeWitt always admired this naturalized citizen, who became so outstandingly an American to the core, and who exemplified in his public life the truth that Americanism is a thing of the spirit. Carl Schurz possessed that spirit to a superlative degree.

A man broad in his sympathies, whose tolerance was as wide as the sky, whose warm humanity was felt by all who knew him, DeWitt Clinton Poole vigorously denounced "Know-Nothingism," which flourished in the middle fifties. Instinctively he felt that any party conceived in racial and religious hatred and born of ignorance was a positive threat to the perpetuity of the principles upon which American government was founded. In New York and in Wisconsin he had rubbed shoulders with men of many foreign origins—Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, and Scandinavians—and had found that human nature is the same in all nationalities. The immigrant tide was bringing a cultural leaven into American life through music and art and love of beauty. Even the hard-working tillers of the soil, building their homesteads in the Promised Land, were helping in their

way to blaze new trails beyond the old frontiers. He admired these people for their sturdy courage and for their loyalty to that which was best in their native culture.

He, too, had known, and still knew, the value and the dignity of honest labor. He had found the newcomers to these shores to be men glad of the opportunity for freedom which America gave them. What did it matter if some people prated about their colonial ancestry? DeWitt Clinton Poole could trace his ancestry back to the earliest settlers, yet to him the only aristocracy worth talking about was the aristocracy of character. Though he did not then know what the decade was to bring forth, he was to witness on the battlefields a heroism among these recently arrived aliens comparable to the heroism of the native-born soldier.

Good times were ruling the country generally, and the decade from 1845 to 1855 was a period of construction and expansion in every phase of the national life. The one great menace was the irreconcilable disagreement between the North and the South on the question of slavery and its extension into territories about to be admitted to statehood. But dark clouds of conflict had been gathering for years and they had become menacingly black as the year 1855 arrived. The acrimony engendered by the clash of opposing forces in Congress was like the rumbling of distant thunder announcing the approaching storm.

Meanwhile, with the railroad opened between Milwaukee and Madison, frequent family visits were made between members of the Mears family and their many friends who had migrated West from central New York. All were benefiting from the general prosperity of the early fifties. Land was being bought and sold with the resulting paper profits of a rising market, and DeWitt and his cousin Nap were reaping their share from the "good times."

In 1855 Horace Greeley visited Madison, and the originator of the slogan, "Go West, young man," wrote flattering letters on his impressions of Wisconsin to his newspaper, the *New York Tribune*. One of DeWitt's most memorable recollections in the after years was of the aging, bespectacled, gray-haired editor in a linen duster, with one pant leg tucked into his boot, speaking of his astonishment at the growth and development of the West. Bayard Taylor, one of the most popular writers and lecturers of the time, also came and was impressed. His reports, printed in the Eastern press, told how the new town was growing like a green bay tree. From a total of two persons in 1837, when Eben and Roseline Peck built their log cabin on the high land between Lake Mendota and Lake Monona, the population of Madison had increased to a full 5,000 by the time DeWitt opened his store in Capitol Square.

Village stores in those days were rostrums for men in-

terested in public affairs, and DeWitt's store was no exception. In it gathered many of the promising young men of the town to discuss current events. In New York there had been a great "World's Fair" at which were displayed the latest improvements in printing presses, power machinery, planting machines, and farming implements. A marvelous new attachment to Cyrus McCormick's harvesting machine was a device for binding the sheaves with twine after the grain was cut. This was a boon for farmers everywhere, and was one of the lively topics for conversation among DeWitt's friends who dropped in at his store in Main Street. News of Commodore Perry's sailing his squadron, including one steam frigate, into the Bay of Yedo, and of his signing a treaty between the ancient kingdom of the Mikado and the United States, was another topic of interest.

Thirty-four years had passed since the Missouri Compromise of 1820 had been made, shutting out slavery from all territory west and north of Missouri—a compromise which its proponents had said would last "forever"; and now the end of that "forever" had come, and Senator Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois, was introducing a bill in Congress which was to be known as the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Many a visitor to the store in the Square prophesied that cutting the territory of Nebraska in two and designating the southern half as Kansas, leaving the inhabitants of both sections to decide whether

or not they would have slave labor, would result only in more turmoil.

Soon it was being rumored that New England Abolitionists were shipping Sharpe's rifles, marked "books," to Kansas, and bodies of armed emigrants from New England and New York were settling at Topeka and Lawrence. "Bleeding Kansas" was soon to be a familiar slogan, along with "Border Ruffians" and "Black Republicans." Even the mysterious "Underground Railroad" was to have its secret outposts in Wisconsin.

The exploits of "Old John Brown of Osawatimic" were headlined in the Madison papers, and DeWitt had many misgivings as he read the news. In his own quiet way, among his friends, he denounced such tactics. Taking the law into one's hands was, in his mind, to go against the fundamental nature of our democratic government—something akin to assassination. Whether committed by Northerners or Southerners, such violence could bode no good for the Republic.

While the danger of disunion was growing, the panic of 1857 came upon the country like a thunderbolt. Of a sudden, it seemed, banks by the hundreds were failing, thousands of manufacturers and merchants were going into bankruptcy, railroads were announcing that they could not meet their obligations, and business generally was at a standstill. For two years the whole country faced "hard times." Aunt Mary Martineau recorded in

her diary how the blow struck them in February of 1858: "Since I last wrote a crisis has come on in this country; we shall suffer as much change as any as the men that bought our land will be unable to pay us and our expenses and desires have increased so much that it will seem unpleasant to reduce them, still I do not lament our change. . . ."

Grimly meeting the situation so far as his own business was concerned, DeWitt, with customary conservatism, kept his financial affairs well in hand and by prudent management succeeded in coming safely through the depression. Discovery of silver in Colorado and Nevada, and of petroleum in Pennsylvania, seemed a happy augury for the country, and like all merchants of the time DeWitt was optimistic. But like most of his contemporaries, he feared for the worst when he opened his morning newspaper one day in the autumn of 1859 and read that John Brown had seized the government arsenal at Harpers Ferry and tried to free the slaves of Virginia.

In less than a year, in Chicago, the second Republican National Convention would be nominating Lincoln for the presidency and at the same time denouncing Brown's act as "lawless and unjustifiable." It was a forthright pronouncement with which DeWitt Clinton Poole heartily agreed.

That November of 1860 he went to the polling place

near his Uncle William Mears's home on Johnson Street to cast his vote. DeWitt's grandfather, James Mears, now eighty-six years old, had asked his three sons, James, William, and Charles, and his two grandsons, DeWitt Poole and Nap Van Slyke, to join him for what was to be a great occasion in the old gentleman's life. Back in Vermont, he had voted for George Washington for a second term, had voted for every President since then, and now, with all his heart in it, he was going to vote for "Honest Abe, the rail splitter," and all his boys were going to do the same.

Less than two months later seven states had withdrawn from the Union while President Buchanan sat inert and confused, alternating between praying and crying, in the White House. When news flashed through the North that the "Star of the West," bearing troops and supplies for Fort Sumter, had been fired upon by the Confederate batteries of Charleston Harbor and had been forced to turn back, it was as foreboding as the news that the Confederate States of America, newly organized, had seized arsenals, forts, and other property of the Federal Government. Yet DeWitt, like many another Northerner, still hoped that conflict could be averted.

To him President Lincoln's inaugural address was the most heartening statement he had read: "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institu-

tion of slavery in the states where it exists," Lincoln said. "I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so." But in that same epoch-making address Lincoln also declared that he held the Union to be perpetual and that he would do everything in his power to keep to the utmost the oath he had just taken, "to preserve, protect, and defend it."

In Madison, DeWitt read the telegraphic news dispatches and thrilled to the import of the words. A war between the states seemed unthinkable and he hoped that, even at this late day, some solution would be found other than fratricidal conflict. But on the morning of March 5, 1861, as he walked downtown to open his store, he knew absolutely that if "Old Abe" needed them to help preserve and defend the Union, the Governor's Guard would volunteer to a man.

4

In 1861 it was firmly believed throughout the South that the Northerners would not fight. Northern "mudsills," they said, would never meet Southern "cavaliers," and Henry Clay, by bringing about compromise after compromise, only confirmed the Southern hotheads in their conviction that the North had no stomach for a fight. An analgesic was used on the growing cancer when an operation might have made unnecessary those four

years of tragedy, in which half a million of the flower of Northern and Southern manhood had to die.

When John and Eliza Martineau visited at The Hermitage in 1824, Andrew Jackson said he feared that any compromise with the slavery question would prove to be an entering wedge to divide the Union and he knew that any attempt at division would mean civil war. By 1861, Jackson had been sleeping the last sleep for almost two decades, beside his Rachel, in the grounds of The Hermitage. Now his prophecy was coming true.

Chapter XI

JACKSON'S PROPHECY

I

ON SATURDAY, April 14, 1861, the people of Charleston watched from the sea front of their lovely old Southern city a duel being fought between the garrisons of the Confederate shore batteries and the gallant little band of United States troops fighting under the Stars and Stripes to defend Fort Sumter. By afternoon, portions of the old fort were burning, and the remaining men of Major Robert Anderson's command were driven by the flames to a small bastion on the windward side, the guns of which they continued to serve. Before sunset of that tragic day, however, the fire of these last guns slackened and finally ceased. Fort Sumter had surrendered. It was war.

The next day President Lincoln issued his call for 75,000 volunteers to defend the Union, and three days later the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment entrained for Washington, while south of the Potomac the entire state militia of Virginia was called to the Confederate colors. For days the national capital was isolated; the Massachusetts troops had been fired upon in Baltimore, and a mob had torn up the tracks between that city and Washington.

The President and his cabinet did not know what response the North would make to his call for troops. Mr. Lincoln, although maintaining his outward calm, passed days of desperate anxiety, and it is reported that on April 23, when the day's business was ended and he and one of his secretaries were alone, the President, after pacing the floor of the executive office in silence and seemingly unconscious of any other presence in the room, repeated with irrepressible anguish: "Why don't they come? Why don't they come?"

All through the North there was a rush to volunteer, but time was required to organize and concentrate the regiments, the majority of which had to be equipped and given some short training for field service.

Amid scenes of tremendous enthusiasm the crack Seventh Regiment of New York started for Washington by sea. Landing at Annapolis, it was joined by a regiment of Massachusetts mechanics, and together they rebuilt the gap in the railroad between Baltimore and Washington, bringing on their field equipment and supplies over the relaid tracks. On April 25, shortly after noon, this advance guard of the Northern hosts entered Washington, and Lincoln knew that he had an army behind him.

2

The President's call was telegraphed to all Northern governors immediately, and early on Monday, April 16,

Governor Alexander Randall, of Wisconsin, issued a proclamation announcing the organization of the First Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers. The Governor's Guard was accepted intact with its seventy-three men and was designated as "K" Company of the new regiment, with Lucius Fairchild, Captain; DeWitt C. Poole, First Lieutenant; and James K. Proudfit, Ensign.

In Madison another company was formed and within the week was accepted by the Governor. The two units then left by train for Camp Scott at Milwaukee, where, with similar units from other Wisconsin towns, they were organized into full regimental formation and put into training for field service under command of Colonel J. C. Starkweather.

By mid-May, organization was completed and the regiment was mustered into the service of the United States for three months, a period which was then considered to be all the time that would be necessary to put down the rebellion. On June 9, under orders from Washington, the First Wisconsin entrained for the front, "fully equipped by the state, with the exception of arms," as one Wisconsin newspaper put it with seeming pride. With the exception of arms! And yet within three weeks this regiment was to lead in the advance across the upper Potomac and go into action in Virginia.

The train trip of the new regiment from Wisconsin to Hagerstown, in western Maryland, was a typical



ANSWERING LINCOLN'S CALL, APRIL, 1861

movement toward the front of raw but enthusiastic troops. A spirit of gaiety, almost hilarity, prevailed. "At Fredonia," the correspondent of the *Wisconsin State Journal* reported, "the ladies, in their usual patriotic style, came aboard the cars and showered bouquets among the boys, not forgetting to bestow that luxury known among civilized men as a sweet kiss. Some of the boys were unfortunate in this respect, as the engineer unmercifully sounded the hoarse notes of the engine for departure."

At Hagerstown the First Wisconsin went into camp, was brigaded under General James Negley, and assigned to the First Division of the army of General Robert Patterson, a veteran of the Mexican War. A brigade order which was issued at Camp Negley, June 25, 1861, detailed Lieutenant D. C. Poole as commander of the provost guard with his post of command "at the turn of the road near Division Headquarters." A week later Patterson led his "country constable army" across the Potomac.

All fears for the safety of the national capital had passed, for a large force was now in Washington and in camps and redoubts about the city. The people of the North already were clamoring for a general forward movement. The cry of "Save Washington!" had been changed to "On to Richmond!"

General Beauregard, with 20,000 Southern volunteers, was in position at Manassas Junction, barring the road to

Richmond at a point where a small railroad came in from the Shenandoah Valley, and where a large creek, called Bull Run, wound its leisurely way eastward across the Virginia countryside. At the northern end of the Shenandoah Valley General Joseph E. Johnston, with about 10,000 "Rebs," was facing Patterson, who, with a somewhat superior force, had the double mission of protecting Washington from the west and keeping Johnston from moving east to reinforce Beauregard.

On July 2 Patterson's leading division crossed the river, the men wading waist deep through the stream and re-forming in column on the hot, dusty Shenandoah Turnpike which led south to Winchester. The First Wisconsin led the advance, and Lieutenant Poole, now regimental adjutant, marched at the head of the regiment with his colonel.

At Falling Waters, a little country hamlet clustered about a crossroads some five miles south of the Potomac, Patterson's advance guard came under a heavy and unexpected fire from the Virginians, who were concealed in the edge of a strip of woodland that crossed the road. Federal skirmishers were thrown out, a few guns were brought up, and the entire leading division was deploying for action when Johnston withdrew, his orders having been to contact and oppose Patterson's advance but not to bring on a general action. The fighting continued, however, until noon, and there were many killed and

wounded on both sides. Undoubtedly many a Wisconsin boy died that day who had never discharged an army musket until he and his friends from home came under fire at Falling Waters—a fire delivered by Virginia boys equally untrained and unhardened to the grim business of war.

The Confederate high command in Richmond knew that the terrific public clamor for action which had arisen throughout the North would soon force Brigadier General Irvin McDowell to leave his position near Washington and move the poorly prepared main Federal army south, on the road to Richmond. If Joe Johnston, with the able assistance of J. E. B. Stuart's cavalry, could keep the cautious Patterson engaged in minor actions—inconsequential marches and labored preparations for a battle that would never occur—Johnston's badly needed ten thousand men could be kept intact, to be whisked over to help Beauregard in the vital battle at the crucial time.

Johnston, with only one brigade, kept Patterson in play while "Jeb" Stuart and his cavalymen, who knew every road and cowpath of that section, harassed the Federals and confirmed the impression that a serious pitched battle was in the making. Although DeWitt Poole never cared to talk much about the war, nor in fact about any of his experiences, he did occasionally tell with a twinkle in his eye how he and the other staff officers of the leading regiment, seeing great clouds of dust rising back of

the Rebel front-line positions, were sure that important enemy troop movements were taking place. All too tardily they found that they had been the victims of a well-timed trick, carried out by "Jeb" Stuart, whose troopers had for days been dragging huge bundles of brush along the dusty roads. The joke was decidedly on the numerically superior but overcautious Federals.

Precious days slipped by, and at one o'clock in the morning of July 18, Johnston received the expected summons to Manassas. Stuart was ordered to keep Patterson "amused" while the Army of the Shenandoah, by forced marches and by railroad, joined Beauregard just in time to save the day at Bull Run.

3

Neither side was really victorious at Bull Run. Each thought it had been defeated, but the moral victory was overwhelmingly for the Confederacy. The Union forces were demoralized and fell back in great disorder. To add to the confusion, whole units, whose term of enlistment had expired, hastily left the field. There was no real panic nor rout until the retreating soldiers, the retiring guns, and the fleeing Congressmen and sight-seers were fired upon on the road east of Bull Run. Then, though the Confederates were much too confused to launch a pursuit, the retreat became a rout, and as darkness fell the Northern soldiers, mixed with

supply wagons and visitors' carriages, streamed over the roads to Washington, "followed only by their own fears."

Although there was, from a technical standpoint, much of the character of military *opéra bouffe* about this first important engagement between the forces of the North and of the South, the losses in killed and wounded were serious, and throughout the North the shock and disappointment brought by the Federal defeat at Bull Run were very deep. To the large group of DeWitt's friends and relatives in Madison a little comic relief was not unwelcome and it came, in the form of a telegram from Washington, during this dark hour of temporary discouragement.

It seems that DeWitt's cousin Napoleon Van Slyke had gone to Washington to offer his services to the Government. While he was there the Federal army started on its march to Richmond, and like many others, he and a Madison man named Benedict had hired a horse and buggy and had driven along with McDowell's Boys in Blue to witness the expected Union triumph. Caught in the panic-stricken retreat, their ramshackle vehicle broke down and they were forced to make their way to the rear as best they could. It was late at night when, hungry and footsore, they saw the lights of Washington and, a few hours later, crossed Long Bridge to safety. At once they wired the news to Madison, Benedict hurriedly

scribbling the telegram: "Terrible battle, disastrous defeat. I and Nap are safe."

Two months before Bull Run, when DeWitt was with his regiment in training at Camp Scott, news reached him that his grandmother, Lois Mears, had died. No better appreciation of her could be recorded than the following entry made by Aunt Mary Martineau in her diary in June, 1861:

Again has affliction visited our family. My dear Mother is now numbered with the dead. She died on the 24th of May in the blessed prospect of happiness after death. . . . My aged father is left to finish his earthly journey alone, as it seems to him, for no one in all this world makes him forget her one moment, yet he mourns not, only grieves her irreparable loss. She was an excellent woman, wife and mother and my aim shall be to imitate her goodness. She was one of the most industrious and intelligent and cheerful companions and was justly loved by all who knew her.

Within the last few months our Country has been distracted by such dissensions that it has now resulted in civil war. Ah, that such should ever be!

4

On August 21, 1861, Lieutenant DeWitt C. Poole was honorably discharged from the service of the United States by reason of the expiration of his term of enlistment, and a month later Governor Randall appointed him lieutenant colonel of the newly formed Twelfth

Wisconsin Regiment which was mustered into service early in November.

The late fall of 1861 saw the opening of two campaigns in the West, far from the fields of Virginia, and it was to this new sector in Missouri and on the Mississippi River that most of the recently formed Wisconsin regiments, enlisted "for three years or duration of the war," were sent. In this "war in southwestern Missouri" and in the states bordering the Mississippi from Cairo to Vicksburg, the three great Union generals of the decisive last year of the conflict, Ulysses S. Grant, William T. Sherman, and Philip H. Sheridan, were winning their spurs by successive grades from captain to major general—Grant and Sherman on "the River" and Sheridan in the advance from St. Louis to the southwest corner of the state, where in the battle of Pea Ridge the organized Confederate forces were defeated and driven out of Missouri.

The Twelfth Wisconsin was transported first to Hannibal and from there, in zero weather, made the long trip across the state, in a train composed mostly of cattle cars, to the small town of Weston on the Missouri River, where they went into quarters in "churches, halls, stores, and houses, under command of General David Hunter," whose force they had joined. Hunter's division was to co-operate with General Curtis, who commanded the main Union army in this sector, and who, in his advance

through Missouri, was ably assisted by an active young West Pointer, Captain Phil Sheridan.

In February, 1862, DeWitt again marched into enemy territory—this time at the head of his regiment. It was a long, cold march that the men made from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Scott to reinforce Curtis's main army, and by the time the Twelfth reached its destination the battle of Pea Ridge had already been fought and won. Then came orders assigning the regiment to a concentration that was made at Fort Riley for the reinforcement of the Union army in New Mexico, which, under Canby and Kit Carson, was falling back before a large Confederate force that had come up from Texas by way of El Paso and the valley of the Rio Grande.

Again the Twelfth Wisconsin marched over wind-swept plains halfway across Kansas, only to find that Canby and Carson, with the help of Colorado volunteers, now had the New Mexico situation well in hand and that no troops would be moved farther west than Fort Riley. The regiment was not getting experience under fire, but the men were hard and fit, were inured to exposure and discipline, and could swing along the road in full equipment for twenty miles a day with no stragglers.

By the early summer of 1862, the Twelfth had been moved to Columbus, Kentucky, one of the points of concentration for Grant's Army of the Tennessee. Grant had made a name for himself by taking Fort Henry and

Fort Donelson during the months the campaign in southwestern Missouri was in progress, and in April had fought at Shiloh, though with questionable results. Then there had followed other actions and troop concentrations leading to his advance into northern Mississippi and to the climax at Vicksburg.

DeWitt was with his regiment in active field service all through this period when Grant, with Sherman as one of his corps commanders, was fighting battles of movement against Pemberton along the railroads and rivers of northern Mississippi. He was also with the first advance on the Tallahatchie River and was in the fighting at Holly Springs, at Hernando, and on the Coldwater. In May, Pemberton was bottled up in Vicksburg and the siege began. In DeWitt's own memoranda we find: "May, 1863. Ordered from Memphis to Vicksburg. Engaged throughout the siege until surrender, July 4, 1863."

5

That fall he was relieved from active field service, appointed a lieutenant colonel in the Veteran Reserve Corps, and made an instructor at the Officers School at Cliffburne Barracks, as well as a member of the board of examiners for officers who had been nominated for promotion to the Veteran Reserve Corps. At this time DeWitt was thirty-five years old and was already a seasoned campaigner. This special assignment lasted the

better part of a year, and in June, 1864, he rejoined the active Army of Virginia at White House Landing, just before that base on the Pamunky River was attacked by Wade Hampton's cavalry.

Again orders from the War Department detached him from his regiment and sent him to Washington to be the Provost Marshal of the District of Columbia. His headquarters were in the War Department building on 17th Street, and often of an evening during that summer of '64 Mr. Lincoln would stroll across from the White House to spend an hour reading the latest dispatches from the front and, occasionally, writing longhand memoranda and letters to the commanding generals in the field. Colonel Poole, as provost marshal, was responsible for the safety of the President, and he would usually stand in the doorway where he could keep his eye on both the room and the corridor leading to it. DeWitt had a deep affection and respect for the tall, ungainly man who never failed to give the young officer a friendly greeting and never forgot a cheery word when departing. As Lincoln perched himself on a high office stool and entwined his long legs about the underpinnings, he seemed, in DeWitt's own words, "more like some huge ape than like the great leader of a nation in travail." But as long as he lived DeWitt never forgot Lincoln's sad, expressive eyes through which the soul of the man was revealed.

DeWitt did not go back to the front again during the war. Draft riots were frequent and a firm and experienced hand was needed in several large cities throughout the North. When Lee surrendered at Appomattox DeWitt was in charge of the provost's office at Scranton. It is possible that if he had remained in Washington as provost marshal until the end of the war, a better guard might have been kept over the President on that tragic night of April 14, 1865.

6

When the war was ended, a great work of reconstruction faced the nation. With Lincoln gone, the task was indeed a heavy one. Still a lieutenant colonel in the National Army, DeWitt was sent to Atlanta for duty under General Oliver O. Howard, Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau. This trying and difficult assignment ended in the spring of 1866, at which time he submitted his resignation and returned to his home in Madison.

His mother was living there, in a house he had built for her, and was being cared for by a young colored girl whom DeWitt had sent North at his own expense from near Vicksburg, both to give the child a home and his mother a household helper. His grandfather, James Mears, had died while DeWitt was in Washington in the summer of 1864, but his uncles and Nap Van Slyke were there to welcome him. Nap had not gone into the

active army but had done fine service under Governor Randall in equipping and supplying the Wisconsin regiments.

DeWitt remained at home for about a year, during which time he again took up the work in his store which had been carried on for him by an agent during his absence of five years. Shortly after his return he was appointed a notary public for Dane County, and the certificate of office was signed by his old friend and company commander, Lucius Fairchild, who had risen to the rank of brigadier general during the war and had been elected governor of Wisconsin in 1866.

Keeping shop in Madison was an uneventful occupation after his army experiences. Where was the adventure in selling crockery, china, and crystal ware when there were so many more exciting things to do? A restlessness came over him that he could not throw off. The more he thought of it, the more he was certain it was the call back to army life that was disturbing his peace of mind. He could go plodding along as a merchant and he might, perhaps, become wealthy in the marts of trade, but the business had little real appeal for him.

One day he discussed the matter with his friend and old commander, Governor Fairchild. They had shared hardship and danger together, and Fairchild had always liked him; had regarded him as an able officer, a good disciplinarian who could command obedience and at the

same time win and hold the affection and loyalty of his men. Fairchild had an idea but said nothing about it to DeWitt. When the greatly reduced Regular Army was reorganized in 1867, DeWitt was offered a post in the permanent military establishment and accepted it. He was commissioned a captain of infantry by President Johnson and ordered back to duty in Atlanta.

DeWitt was now within a month of his thirty-ninth birthday. It seemed a long, long time since that day when he had set out from Elbridge on the journey by canal boat and stagecoach to Indiana. Even the day he first came to Madison seemed remote. So much had happened since then. Death had been taking its toll in the family circle while he had been away, and even his aunts and uncles were no longer young. All his friends of the early times in Madison were married. Of all the gay companions who had set many a feminine heart aflutter at the dances given by the Governor's Guard, he alone was single. His old cronies now were saying that DeWitt was not the marrying kind, that he was a confirmed bachelor. But their wives were not so certain. Many a matron had tried the rôle of matchmaker, but though none had succeeded, all had an explanation: DeWitt had not yet met the right girl. Some day, they said, Dan Cupid would take aim and send a golden arrow winging to his heart.

Chapter XII

CALL TO ADVENTURE

I

SERGEANT Murphy brought the mail into the office of Captain Poole at the headquarters of the Freedmen's Bureau in Atlanta one morning in mid-May of 1869. As usual, most of it was familiar—reports from branches of the Bureau throughout Georgia and requests for food and work relief, still coming in from outlying districts that had been denuded and devastated by Sherman's army in its march from Atlanta to the sea.

"War is hell," Sherman had said; and now the people of Georgia knew that he had said only half of it, for Reconstruction was as bad, if not worse. These were the days depicted by Margaret Mitchell in her novel *Gone with the Wind*; and if Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler ever lived in the flesh, they lived right there in Atlanta on that May day.

The sergeant waited as General Howard's assistant glanced through the communications, and then, drawing himself up rigidly to his full six feet of Irish-American soldierhood, said: "General Howard's compliments, Sir, and he would like to be seein' Captain Poole in his office as soon as the Captain has read this."

DeWitt glanced at the small printed sheet:



Captain Poole
WHEN IN ATLANTA, 1869

Headquarters of the Army
Adjutant General's Office
Washington, May 7, 1869

General Orders

No. 49

By orders received from the War Department the following named officers are, under and by authority of an Act of Congress organizing the Indian Department, hereby detailed to execute the duties of Indian Superintendents and Agents . . .

Captain DeWitt C. Poole, formerly Lieutenant Colonel, Veteran Reserve Corps, is hereby assigned to the position of Agent for the Sioux Indians, with post at Whetstone Creek Reservation, Dakota Territory.

By Command of
General Sherman.

E. D. Townsend,
Adjutant General

DeWitt was somewhat taken aback. Dakota Territory! A post on the frontier among the untamed Sioux! Their depredations during and just after the war were known in every detail by the whole Regular Army. What was up? His reverie was cut short by a scrape of one of Sergeant Murphy's impatient feet.

"Oh yes, Sergeant. My compliments to the General. . . . I will report to him in a few minutes."

"Good morning, General. I'm reporting to you regarding this order from the War Department."

"Yes, yes; I'm sorry to lose you, Poole. I don't know who in the world could have recommended you for that

job, but it's a real one, and by both experience and temperament you are well suited for the work. It is really another sort of reconstruction work. The people and the country will, of course, be absolutely unlike what we have here, but in each place our Government is dealing with a race that is as different from our own people in every way as they are in the color of their skins. They are children, Sir, both the black man and the red man, and you must deal with them as such."

"Thank you, General. Yes, it is quite a change from Atlanta to Whetstone, and I don't know a thing about Indians, General; but from what I've heard about those tribes under Red Cloud and Spotted Tail they are better able to take care of themselves than are these Negro freedmen we're dealing with down here."

"Well, maybe you're right, Poole; maybe you're right. Anyhow, good luck and goodbye."

2

A trip of fourteen hundred miles by railroad brought the new Indian agent to Sioux City, Iowa, the "jumping-off place" of the day. From there a stagecoach must be used, or the flat-bottomed steamboat of the Missouri River. The next part of the journey to this new field of action is described in DeWitt's own words:*

* *Among the Sioux of Dakota*, by Captain D. C. Poole, New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1881.

Deciding, then, upon the stage as the most reliable mode of reaching Yankton, the capital city of Dakota, I am, by previous arrangement with mine host, awakened at the witching hour of three A.M., and with many yawnings and stretchings prepare for the day's work.

The mud wagon, complimented by the name of stage, makes its appearance in due time, and, it having called around for stray passengers before arriving at the St. Elmo, I find I must consider myself fortunate to obtain a seat inside or out. It actually accommodates four inside and one outside with the driver, but anywhere from six to a dozen passengers usually present themselves to be wedged into seats, and occupy the limited space as best they may.

The stage agent leaves us to jam and crowd one another to our hearts' content, while the driver impassively nods in his seat until the magic words, "All right!" pronounced by the former, set us in motion. We wriggle and twist, draw in one foot and shove out another, but finally, with elbows pinioned and sullen looks, settle down to the morning ride in silence; for fifteen good English miles are to be gone over before breakfast, and who wants to talk before coffee? Thus solidly packed, we sway from side to side, or jounce into a slough and out in unison with our vehicle, the head and neck moving upon the shoulders being the only indication of life.

A stop. The driver exclaims, "Mail!" and at the same moment a leathern bag strikes the ground with a thud, near the door by our side. An easy-going individual, emerging from a typical Western ranch, takes it and disappears. The driver is down from his seat, his horses are watered, we inside twist our necks a little more than usual, until someone explains: "Mail station; half way to breakfast," and then solemn silence again. The mail bag is returned, the driver once more in his seat, and we are off. After napping and nodding a weary time we make another

stop, and here we have a change of horses and, at last, breakfast. The more recent arrivals from the East look around for washing facilities, and find a tin basin on a bench outside the house, water to be dipped from a barrel close at hand, and a general towel which is continually revolved in the search for a dry spot, or one that has not done too much previous duty. The towel has a horsey smell, showing that the stablemen do not have all the modern improvements in their retiring rooms.

Breakfast is announced and, without the least sign of ceremony, each particular passenger hurries to the table as fast as his legs can carry him and, seating himself, eagerly scans the different dishes. Some of all within reach is soon transferred to his plate and dispatched with no show of dalliance. Muddy coffee, fried pork and potatoes, and bread and butter form the repast, eagerly relished and cheerfully paid for at such prices as would secure in the East a sumptuous meal.

Fresh horses are attached, the passengers repacked, each slyly striving to secure more room to the detriment of his neighbor, and we are once more on the road.

The stage road leads over the flat, monotonous bottom land of the Missouri, which usually extends back some four or five miles, but is occasionally narrowed down by the encroaching bluffs which, at Elk Point, Vermilion and Yankton, reach to the water's edge.

The passengers occasionally awake to some little conversation, always commonplace, but our chief interest centers in the frequent sloughs, the safe crossing of which is always more or less a matter of speculation. As we approach one the driver tightens his reins, flourishes his whip, and then in we go. The wheels sink lower and lower to the hubs; our motion is gradually retarded, and there is a general rising of interest among the passengers; we nearly stop, then floundering, and splashing, slowly move on, the rims of the wheels carrying great clods of

mud and grass. Finally we reach more solid ground, and the gentle trot of our horses speeds us on our way. We pass Elk Point, Vermilion and Thompson's "the Boss Ranch"; we have changes of mail and changes of horses; and finally, as the sun sends its last slanting rays over the broad prairie, distant bluffs and strips of woodland, it is announced that we are approaching Yankton.

A sharp turn or two in the road, indicative of future streets; a faster trot of our horses; a sudden stop by a plank platform in front of a house, and we are at the Merchants' Hotel of '69. A number of persons emerge from the hotel, nearly filling the walk, and scan with interest each passenger as we awkwardly leave the stage and set foot in the Capital of Dakota.

Here I was to pay an official visit to the Governor and ex-officio Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and accordingly I lost no time in seeking the small dwelling on the river bank, which I was informed was his headquarters. The genius of our institutions was illustrated in the unostentatious surroundings of a territorial Governor, representing as he did, the power and dignity of the general Government, but far from the artificial requirements of metropolitan taste. The office which I now entered was a plain, uncarpeted room, furnished with a table, a desk, a revolving chair (gubernatorial), one or two common chairs and a huge spittoon centrally situated. On introducing myself I was cordially greeted by the Governor, whom I found to be a genial and kindly disposed official.

Naturally, we at once reverted to the Indians on the reservation at Whetstone Creek, and I expected to hear some wise suggestions with regard to their management, and interesting accounts of them generally. Much to my surprise, the Governor and ex-officio Superintendent of Indian affairs acknowledged but a slight acquaintance with them, and knew nothing personally, as he had never been at the Agency. He had had

experience with the Omahas in Nebraska, but the wild Sioux of his Territory were a very different people.

I noticed at this time one fact which was afterward confirmed, that those who had been some time associated with Indians assumed to know little of their character, and usually had no plans for their management, or fixed views as to how our government should treat them. At some time these persons might have had plans and policies, but actual contact had shaken their faith in making Indians first-class citizens and Christians during the time of one administration or even of one life. But a newly-appointed attaché of the Indian Bureau, born and raised in the New England States, perhaps, will unhesitatingly mark out a course to pursue, which will transform a savage into an enlightened citizen, surely within the period of his administration. Thus "distance lends enchantment to the view."

In the midst of our interesting conversation a steamboat whistle was heard. In an instant the Governor seized his hat and was hastening toward the door. I asked what was the matter, expecting to hear that his office was in flames, or some like accident.

"Didn't you hear that whistle?" he exclaimed. "There's a steamboat coming, come on!" I joined him, and we hurried toward the river, where a steamboat could be seen in the distance, making slow headway against the current, though under full head of steam, as shown by the black smoke rolling out of her funnels, and the white puffs of steam issuing from her escape pipes.

The whole town seemed to be approaching the landing, and I was informed that they always turned out when a boat arrived from below; some having actual business, some moved by curiosity, and all impelled by the desire for some excitement which this event seemed to supply.

The *Evening Star*, as the steamer proved to be, was en route for Fort Sully, and having had sufficient experience with the stage, I concluded to try the river. The *Evening Star*, to be sure, had been a week on the way from Sioux City, and no one knew how long it would take her to reach Whetstone Creek reservation; but the saving of time ceases to be an object as you recede from civilization. The tri-weekly stage made the distance from Yankton to Fort Randall, about seventy-five miles, within fifteen hours, but the steamboat promised more comfort, if less speed.

I found the Missouri River steamboat was not commodious, nor luxuriously furnished in any way for the accommodation of passengers. The small staterooms had scarcely enough in them for comfort; while the table was supplied with the coarsest food; fried liver and onions, fried bacon, thick coffee and hot, sodden biscuits formed the principal articles of diet. Milk and butter were luxuries by no means common.

As we progressed up the river, the captain, pilot, mate and all hands seemed to direct their entire attention towards making the *Evening Star* push her way over sand bars, and to finding that part of the river which contained the greatest depth of water. This was often a hidden mystery, requiring for its solution hours of diligent search in a small boat manned with a crew and pilot, who, with sounding pole in hand, fathomed all parts of the river, while the steamboat "lay to" with her nose gently pushed against the bank, and her wheel kept in just sufficient motion to hold her against the strong current. The pilot, having fully reconnoitered, would return to his elevated house and jingle a bell. A louder noise of puffing steam would be heard, and an attempt at further progress made. Often this selected channel would prove a failure; the boat would gradually "slow up" as she came in contact with the sandy bottom, and then come to a dead stop. But the master of the craft was

equal to the occasion, and would issue the startling order, "Plant a dead man!"

At this a boat would be manned and a log carried on shore some distance above the point where the steamboat was stuck. Here a line from the steamboat was made fast to the log, which was firmly buried in a deep hole dug for the purpose. The end of the line on board was made fast to the capstan, a full head of steam applied to the latter, and drawing heavily upon the line, which was wound up on the rapidly revolving capstan, we would be gradually dragged over the sand bar.

Next morning a stop was made at Fort Randall where, during the unloading of government supplies, some of the officers of the 22nd Infantry came on board to visit. That afternoon the *Evening Star* pushed on up stream and towards evening of the next day, the low uncouth buildings of Whetstone Agency came into view on the west bank of the river. Whites and Indians could be seen, making their way leisurely toward the landing, moved by that curiosity which seemed to pervade all dwellers on the Missouri, in frontier days, to see a steamboat of any size or description, especially one that was coming up from "the States."

3

Before the Civil War there had been very little penetration of the lands of the Sioux by white men. The trans-continental emigrant trails passed them to the south, and the only real intrusion had been by those settlers who had opened farms in southwestern Minnesota. There was, however, a considerable amount of boat traffic up and down the Missouri River.

During the second year of the Civil War there

occurred a terrifying uprising of the Sioux Indians in Minnesota, and the white settlers throughout the countryside bordering the Minnesota River west of Mankato were set upon by overwhelming numbers of savage warriors led by Little Crow. Hundreds of white men were butchered and tortured, farms and towns were burned, and one hundred and fifty women and children were led into horrible captivity.

When news of the outbreak reached Governor Alexander Ramsey in St. Paul, he called upon Henry Sibley, a young Indian trader, scout, and trapper, to take the field in command of 1,400 men, to reinforce the small garrison at Fort Ridgely and to attack and punish the Indians, after first attempting to free the women and young girls who had been captured. Sibley was remarkably successful in carrying out his mission. The captives were freed, the Indians were defeated, thirty-eight were hanged, and Little Crow's band was broken up, the survivors being driven toward the Missouri River.

During the next two years there was intermittent fighting with the Sioux, mostly in what is now North Dakota. Before the Civil War ended, General Sully had established a chain of frontier posts—named for army officers and called forts—occupying strategic points at intervals of about a hundred miles along the upper Missouri, from Sioux City to the mouth of the Yellowstone River.

With the close of the war the old westward urge brought on another big movement to the frontier and into the lands beyond it. Gold was discovered in the mountainous country of southwestern Montana, and the Alder Gulch region is said to have yielded more than ten million dollars' worth of the yellow metal in four consecutive years. Helena, Bozeman, and other mining towns sprang into existence and were dependent on outside markets for their supplies and for their output. Preparations were made in 1865 for the opening of a direct wagon road to Montana, starting from Laramie on the North Platte and winding north through the Big Horn country of Wyoming to Fort Benton in the center of the mining district. This road ran through the heart of the finest hunting ground of the Oglala Sioux, lying east of the Big Horn Mountains and on the southern watershed of the Yellowstone River. That meant trouble.

The Union Pacific Railroad was building west from Omaha along the valley of the Platte River, through the favorite home and buffalo-hunting country of the Brule Sioux. There were many other branches of the Sioux Nation involved in these two real invasions of their land, as were other separate tribes, such as the Cheyennes and the Crows, but a complete discussion of the situation would be unnecessarily long and complicated. It is the Oglalas, under their chief, Red Cloud, and particularly the Brules, under Spotted Tail, whose actions during the



next ten years weave in and out of the experiences of DeWitt Clinton Poole among the Sioux of Dakota.

4

The Sioux country of 1867 was that great area now included in the states of Nebraska, the two Dakotas (which were then one territory), Wyoming, and most of Montana—a huge domain, much greater in area than all of New England, New York, and Pennsylvania put together. The Montana road and the military posts along its route aroused the special enmity of Red Cloud's branch of the Sioux Nation and their allies, the Cheyennes. They raided and fought the little frontier garrisons and attacked and burned any wagon trains that attempted to pass through. Along the line of the new transcontinental railway there was not so much trouble, but there were tragic incidents at many of the little stations, and surveying parties and work crews were attacked and killed.

In July, 1867, by an act of Congress, a peace commission was appointed to confer with Red Cloud, Spotted Tail, and other hostile Sioux chiefs in an effort to ascertain the cause of their disaffection. It took the rest of the summer and autumn to arrange a meeting with Red Cloud, to be held at Laramie, and then the wily old chief did not go down but sent word that there was only one thing he wanted, and that was the withdrawal of the

soldiers stationed on the Montana road. He said also that he would try to meet the commission sometime the next spring or summer.

The following year, a treaty was signed with twenty-four chiefs, not including Red Cloud. He remained obdurate until every white soldier had been withdrawn from his country and every military post and frontier fort on the Montana road had been abandoned to destruction by the Indians. But the other chiefs signed the so-called Treaty of 1868 which guided our Government's relations with the Sioux Nation up to the time when flagrant violations of it by both parties, but particularly by the white men, led to the Sioux War of the seventies.

It was a friendly treaty that had been signed—full of the usual promises of perpetual peace and goodwill on the part of the Government. An agency would be constructed for Red Cloud and his people in the extreme northwestern corner of Nebraska, while for Spotted Tail and his people a similar one was promised on the banks of the Missouri River, to which country he agreed to move from the valley of the Platte. At these agencies the Government promised to station a competent representative with an efficient set of employees to carry out the many paternalistic and visionary provisions of the treaty concerning rations, farms, churches, schools, implements, and clothing which were promised the Indians in return for their giving up their attacks along the

Montana road and for moving away from the buffalo herds of the North Platte River. Above everything else in the treaty, the Indians held the provision that they were given as *theirs forever* all the country lying west of the Missouri River, north of Nebraska, and east of the Big Horn Mountains. The northern boundary of this reservation was fixed by the 46th parallel of latitude, which to the Indian mind meant precisely nothing. Possession of this princely domain was the cause of much subsequent misunderstanding and discontent. It was given to these untutored Indians in solemn treaty, stipulating that no person whatever, excepting officers and agents of the Government, should ever be permitted to pass over, settle upon, or reside in the territory so described.

Events in one short year after its signing, proved the utter impossibility of keeping the treaty in good faith, and of protecting from encroachment the terms of this immense contract. During that year, Spotted Tail and his Brules, with several bands of hangers-on, had moved from the Platte River country to Whetstone Agency, and at the expiration of that first year, DeWitt Clinton Poole went ashore from the "Evening Star" to represent the dignity of the United States and to carry out his Government's obligations to the Sioux Nation.

Chapter XIII

SPOTTED TAIL

I

ACCORDING to custom, a council of the principal chiefs and warriors must be called to announce the arrival of such a dignitary as the new agent. Word was sent to the several chiefs, some of whom maintained the lodges of their people close to the agency, and some in camps on the prairie at a distance of one or two days' travel on horseback. The old medicine man of a nearby village was employed to visit the several camps and, as he journeyed, to announce in his stentorian voice the desire of the new agent for a council. There was no danger of failure as to an audience; for, besides the incentive offered by the opportunity for speechmaking, always attractive to the Indian, there would be the accompanying feast.

A special council lodge was erected and extra rations of beef and coffee were issued to the squaws who would prepare the food for their lords and masters, bidden to attend the ceremony. Extra paint was applied and the gayest attire donned by those who were to attend, and these fortunate ones completed their costumes by the addition of the usual weapons, consisting of bows and quivers and the latest improved firearms.

Spotted Tail, having arrived from the prairie with some of his principal braves, was joined by the other chiefs, and all entered the lodge with great dignity. In taking seats each was exceedingly punctilious as to the relative position of his place in council. First came the "feast," which consisted only of boiled meat, and of coffee passed around in tin cups by the humble followers of the chiefs. After the plates and kettles had been removed, the pipe, filled and lighted, was handed from one to another for a smoke, each taking a few whiffs before parting with it. The feasting and smoking having been completed in a very deliberate manner, the conference gradually dropped into dead silence, a signal that the talk was to commence.

Army men are not orators, and DeWitt was no exception to this rule; but now that silence had fallen on the gathering and all eyes were turned on him, there was no escape. He arose and began by telling them the old, old story of how their Great White Father in Washington desired to do all in his power for them; how he wished them to remain at some fixed point, learn to cultivate the soil, have permanent homes where they could be taught the ways of the white man, have churches and schoolhouses, and eventually become prosperous and happy. This part of the talk elicited many "Hows" from the audience, as visions of ease and abundance always did; but his hearers cooled perceptibly when DeWitt

went on to tell them of orders recently received from Washington to the effect that they *must* remain on the reservation and, should they leave it, they would do so at the risk of being driven back by soldiers. All this was duly translated into the Sioux language by the interpreter.

After a short pause Spotted Tail arose to make the first remarks, as was suitable to the principal chief of this branch of the Sioux Nation. In his native tongue, with a quiet dignity that was augmented by his finely poised attitude, and with his blanket drawn over one shoulder, leaving the left shoulder bare to give full play to his graceful gestures, the chief said that he was glad to see his new agent who, he hoped, was going to bring to him and his people the many things promised in the treaty. He wanted some powder and lead for his camp to use in hunting deer, antelope, and buffalo. He said that he had had an agent down in the Platte River country who had given him everything he had asked for, and he hoped the new agent would prove equal to him, inasmuch as the Indians were poor and needed clothes, blankets, axes, and kettles, as well as beef cattle to replace the buffalo.

These remarks were received with many emphatic "Hows" from Spotted Tail's party, and then other chiefs followed in a similar strain, each probably using such variations as his own native oratory could invent. DeWitt promised to do all in his power, and the council broke up with seeming good will on both sides.

An all-important part of the duty of the agent was the issuing of food to the Indians. Staples such as coffee, flour, and bacon were kept in large storehouses and held for frequent issue; for, inasmuch as the Indians knew that enormous quantities of food were stored away for their use, they followed their old native habit of eating to repletion, when they had abundance, and of giving little thought to the future.

Beef was issued to them "on the hoof." At regular intervals cowboys and Mexican herders wearing high-heeled boots and oversized spurs drove large herds of Texas cattle up the long trail from the cattle ranges of the South. These herds would be driven up the east side of the Missouri, this being safer because from Fort Randall north the region to the west of the river was Indian country, and travelers in that section were always in imminent danger. Reaching a point opposite the agency the herd of several thousand animals would be rounded up and made to swim across the broad Missouri. To induce them to do this was an undertaking beset with many difficulties. Like most other animals, both wild and domestic, they became very much alarmed when in the vicinity of wild Indians. A knowledge of this fact was of great value to the Indians in their stealing expeditions. Their shrill whoops and shaking of blankets or robes, together with their peculiar smoky odor, would set the

most sober-minded horse or cow on a perfect rampage.

When a herd was to be crossed at Whetstone, the usual procedure was to find a bold bluff, intersected by a wide ravine which led to the water's edge. The herders would drive the cattle to the head of the ravine and start them gently toward the river, increasing their speed until, as they were about to enter the stream, the leaders were at full run. They would then be plunged into the swift current by their own momentum and by their followers closely packed in the rear. The opposite bank would be kept clear of Indians, and often a few staid work oxen would be placed near its edge as decoys; while on the shore from which the cattle were starting, mounted men would be stationed, who, by shouting and discharging firearms, would try to keep the animals moving in a line to the opposite bank.

A few feet from the first plunge into the water the cattle would be swimming, breasting the rapid current; but the leaders, getting a whiff of the tainted Indian air from the agency, would invariably change their course and swim back toward the bank which they had just left. Despite the shouting of the cowboys on shore, the sharp cracking of whips, and the discharging of firearms, the half-crazed leaders would blindly return, and, coursing along the bank to a second ravine, dash through it and out on the prairie, followed, into the river and out again, by the whole herd.

After a long chase the herd would be rounded up and driven to the head of the ravine to repeat the same maneuver. This was often done again and again in the hope each time that some animal would conclude to cross to the opposite shore, and thus set an example which the others would surely follow.

In the fall and spring, when the water was cold, which added to the difficulty, three or four days would often be spent in trying to "make a crossing," aided by the practical lore of the professional herder and with the help of the Indians, who were the most expert of all. Any one of the last would ride boldly into the water among the struggling animals, and, swimming his pony to the side of one of the leaders, would jump astride his back and try to keep him in a direct course for the opposite bank by knocking with a club on his long horns when he attempted to turn, which he usually did. When fairly on the way to the shore and beyond the possibility of turning, the Indian would draw his pony to his side by his long lariat, remount, and extricate himself from the swimming mass of infuriated animals. The white men, following on the flanks and swimming their horses into the water, would come to the shore shaking with cold, while the Indians and half-breeds would be unaffected, although naked except for the breechclouts about their loins. After many and various attempts at crossing, the same herd would be brought to the river, driven in, and,

without any apparent cause, would strike out for the opposite shore.

Big Mouth, an Oglala chief and a relative of the renowned Red Cloud, was the nominal chief of the so-called "loafer" Indians at the agency. The cattle for the use of his people were slaughtered by professional butchers and the meat was distributed to them in accordance with the latest census of his band.

Fire Thunder and Swift Bear received their beef on the hoof, and their young bucks took wild delight in treating the animals as though they were buffalo. A large number of cattle would be driven to a point near the Indian camp, where a huge corral had been built as a sort of primitive stockyard, from which the issue was to be made.

There was a chute similar to the mechanism used for loading steers into freight cars, but with the difference that the steers were run into the open instead of into a traffic prison. Above the chute was a small house not unlike that of the switch-tender in a railroad yard. This was the post of the issue clerk and the keeper of the ration roll. The clerk would call out a name, and when an Indian responded and was identified, the steers due his family group were driven into a pen at the entrance to the chute. Then, when all was ready, the clerk made a mark in his book and shouted, "Release," the gate to the chute swung wide and the panicky steers rushed into

the open, where lay in wait a brigade of boys and men mounted on impatient ponies and clutching repeating rifles. True to custom, all were smeared with war paint, and most of them were stripped to breechelout and moccasins. The steers, seeking freedom, were greeted with a war whoop. More frightened than ever and with tails in the air, they would bolt toward the horizon. At their heels rode a yelling band of redskins.

For many generations the Indians had ridden hard after buffalo, and it was their fixed belief that meat was not good unless the animals had run miles at top speed. A range steer was a fleet animal, and when cornered he could fight; but the odds were all against him under the circumstances, for when his pursuers thought his blood was properly heated, the shooting began, and that was the end.

Spotted Tail, the head chief, steadfastly refused to interest himself in transporting to his camp his supplies of bacon, sugar, coffee, and other staples, but with his cattle it was a different matter. His young warriors were always on hand to receive their allotment, usually from fifty to sixty head at a time, and took pleasure in driving them to camp, whatever the distance. At this time none but Texas cattle were purchased for the Indians. They were brought from their native prairies, and were as wild as any untamed animal. They had the wide, branching horns, long legs, and lank bodies peculiar to their breed—

seldom weighing, at best, more than a thousand pounds gross weight. They were as fleet as elk and as easily frightened. The approach of a wolf or a strange dog would often start a whole herd running, causing a stampede, and it required a good horse and a bold rider to overtake them.

3

Although Whetstone Agency was at least fifty miles from any white settlement, it was not exempt from the baneful influence of the unscrupulous white man who used to follow in the wake of our advanced military posts and hover around secluded Indian agencies for the dual purpose of squatting on some fine tract of adjoining land and profiting from the illicit trade in "forty-rod" whiskey.

The Sioux Indians as a whole were opposed to the use of whiskey, and in council Spotted Tail often talked against its introduction among his people by the white man. There was, however, what we would now call a fast set at the agency, whose members would get drunk whenever they could find liquor, while most of the half-breeds seemed to consider it their duty to indulge at every opportunity, becoming wildly demonstrative and attempting to imitate the gay and festive ranchman and the desperado with whom they had come in contact and whom they regarded as models for one enjoying the blessings of civilization.

Big Mouth was accused at times of enjoying his "likker," and this weakness, together with his jealousy of Spotted Tail, led to his undoing. Big Mouth, who was a local chief of the Oglalas, was a near relative of Red Cloud, head chief of that branch of the Sioux, and he used to boast that if Spotted Tail and his Brules ever gave him cause, he had only to call upon the great Red Cloud to seat him firmly in supreme power at Whetstone. This feud was causing increasing difficulty in DeWitt's management of the Indians, as was also the more and more frequent introduction of whiskey among them, at which Big Mouth connived in his ambitious scheme to rule or ruin.

Spotted Tail always kept his own camp of several hundred lodges at a considerable distance from the agency, and one reason he always gave for refusing to "come in" was that he wanted to protect his young men against the evils that he found there. Notwithstanding this attitude, Spotted Tail himself often came, and in October of this year, with some of his warriors, he was visiting the agency on his usual errand of trying to arrange for an increase in his allowance of beef cattle and supplies. One night the Indians had been unusually noisy in their campfire songs and drum-beating—evidence that plenty of whiskey was in camp. Toward midnight a few shots were fired and a bullet from the rifle of some discontented warrior crashed through the door of DeWitt's

quarters, ricocheted about the room, and lodged in his bureau. What took place next morning is given in his own words:

About daylight I was aroused by a loud knocking at my door, and was excitedly informed by my visitor, the man in charge of the train loaded with supplies for Spotted Tail's camp, that the Indians were fighting, and that they had ordered him not to move out with his train. Upon going outside, I found a brisk discharge of firearms was progressing, the bullets whizzing through the air in various directions and producing an untranquilizing effect.

While I was talking with the teamster, and advising him to go ahead with the train, he suddenly exclaimed, "There they come!" and disappeared. Looking in the direction indicated, I saw two bodies of Indians approaching, fully armed with rifles and revolvers, and with their bows strung; evidently they meant mischief. I was alone, and had not the advantage wished for by the party in a tight place, who only desired some one with a reputation for bravery to run, and he would try to keep up with him. As the Indians came nearer, I observed that they were divided into two parties, one headed by Spotted Tail, and the other by Blue Horse, a brother of Big Mouth. Before I could make up my mind which way to absent myself, I was surrounded, and, by gestures, directed to go into the council lodge, which I did, followed by the chiefs and warriors.

The situation was awkward and constrained. I did not know the intentions of the red men, but, as it had often been intimated that they could kill all the whites at their leisure and then leave for parts unknown, I had an uncomfortable suspicion that the killing was about to commence, and that, for obvious reasons, I should be the victim, being the only white man present. Not understanding the language, I could not tell what they said,

should they offer me any choice as to the manner of my taking off. To add to the confusion, the discharge of firearms continued outside, and every shot might bring a scalp.

Immediately upon entering the council lodge, Blue Horse commenced a furious tirade addressed, as far as I could understand, to the Brule warriors. He added to the dramatic effect by dropping his blanket and thus exposing his naked form painted for war. A quiver full of arrows was slung to his back, in one hand he held his strung bow, and in the other a Winchester rifle, which lay across the hollow of the arm holding the bow. A scalping knife and two navy revolvers strapped to his waist completed his armament.

In the midst of his wild harangue, as he bounded about upon the floor gesticulating fiercely, Spotted Tail, who was seated near me, quietly reached down under his blanket, unnoticed by Blue Horse, and cocked his rifle. Evidently now there was to be a desperate encounter between the two factions, Brules and Oglalas. Confined in a small room, with all ways of egress stopped by sullen warriors, each armed with the contents of a small arsenal, I, a neutral white man, would be the first slain.

This wild scene continued for some time, when a movement outside indicated an arrival, and there was ushered into the room a white man, pale and agitated, who I knew understood the Sioux language, and could tell me what was going on.

Blue Horse kept the floor until he gradually ran down and stopped. I then expected to hear from the interpreter the fate of the white men at the agency; that the Indians were tired of the restraints imposed upon them by the employees of the Government and intended incontinently to murder all of them, help themselves to rations to their heart's content, and then journey to their friends in the hostile camps. But he was given no chance to tell me the substance of Blue Horse's tirade, for "Thigh," an Oglala warrior whom I had always considered

rather inoffensive, rose, and through the interpreter, addressed some remarks to me. In the first place, he said, a large quantity of whiskey had been brought to the Agency, and some of his friends had taken a little too much. But who made the whiskey? The Indians didn't; but the white men did.

I had to nod assent to this proposition, and he continued that, as the white man made whiskey, and the Indians bought and used it, it made their hearts bad; and that he was sorry to say that his friend Big Mouth had been shot, and now lay dying from the effects of his wound. Furthermore, that Spotted Tail was the man who had committed the act.

So now I had some clue to the unusual excitement. Thigh continued his remarks for some time, denouncing the Agency and the ways of white men generally, but more especially the making of whiskey; closing with a short eulogy on Big Mouth. While talking, he held in his hand a loaded revolver at full cock, to assist him in his gesticulations and enforce his points, and as most of the time it was pointed toward me, and within a few feet of my head, I was rather glad when he could think of nothing more to say.

Spotted Tail had remained seated from the time of his entrance as unconcerned as a statue, his only movement being the cocking of his rifle when Blue Horse was speaking. He was fresh from the melee, but his iron nerves were unshaken. He now rose, and, having first delivered a short temperance lecture, acknowledged that he had shot Big Mouth, excusing his action only so far as to say that he was sorry. He then said that the object of their early visit was to lay the whole matter before me, for me to decide what should be done.

This turn of affairs was calculated to restore my confidence, making me, as it did, a judge in place of victim. I was not particularly sorry that Big Mouth was passing away, but took the poet's license to say that I was; eulogized him as a true friend

of his people and of the white man (as I had often heard him say he was), and expressed the hope that they would not allow the matter to go further; for it would be much better to kill their enemies, and not each other who were friends.

This brought forth some "Hows" from the braves, and I felt encouraged, and went on to say that, as Spotted Tail had said he was sorry, he would as a matter of course pay Blue Horse, the brother of Big Mouth, some ponies, suggesting ten as about the proper number; and that, as most of them had made a night of it, they had better go to their tepees and sleep, and think over what had been said.

Greatly to my satisfaction they agreed to this proposition, and took their departure.

4

During the autumn and winter of 1869-70 serious discontent appeared among the Indians. The winter was very severe. Their tepees were thin and worn, and the canvas, which had been promised them to replace the hides of the buffalo they could no longer hunt, had not arrived. The wild and turbulent "hostiles," whom the approach of winter had brought among them, helped to increase the discontent by thrilling accounts of bold raids, startling attacks upon their enemies, and the pleasures of the chase, all of which they had enjoyed by maintaining a free and independent summer life. The old, wild habits had not lost their charm, and the life of the Indians who had accepted the terms of the treaty and had come to live on the reservation seemed, by comparison, tame and dull.

Buffalo were reported in abundance along the Platte River, but, although white hunters were slaughtering them by thousands, the request of the Sioux to hunt on the Platte and Republican rivers had been refused, notwithstanding that this right to hunt just off the reservation was in accordance with one of the provisions of the Treaty of 1868.

Then, too, the Indians were continually hearing, through the whites and half-breeds among them, about newspaper articles, telling of meetings in Eastern cities which were addressed by speakers who gave glowing accounts of the richness of the country occupied by the Sioux. They pictured a new Eldorado in the Big Horn Mountains and the Black Hills, and called upon the adventurous and enterprising to start in the spring from the Platte River and fight their way through to their destination despite hostile Indians.

The Northern Pacific Railroad was projected, and newspapers in the states gave glowing accounts of the rich lands west of the Missouri, to be opened up for settlement, and of the beds of coal and mines of gold and silver. These matters were discussed without the slightest reference to the rights and possessions of the Indians that were guaranteed to them by solemn treaty.

The Indians became more and more incensed and so demonstrative and menacing that DeWitt asked that a detachment of troops be sent to the agency for station.

Some months later a permanent garrison was established by one company of infantry which was moved up from Fort Randall and quartered in newly-constructed log barracks, inclosed in a stockade which was strengthened by blockhouses at the four corners. The winter passed without further incident.

5

To say that the winter passed without further incident is not exactly correct, for an incident of the greatest import in the life of DeWitt Clinton Poole occurred in February, 1870. With the Indians well in hand and Whetstone snowed in, DeWitt took a leave of absence, and, with one of the young officers at Fort Randall, Lieutenant Oskaloosa M. Smith, went by river steamer to St. Louis for a few weeks of social life and contact with civilization. Smith knew St. Louis well, had many friends there, and was the one who arranged the details of their stay and planned their activities from the time they arrived in town and shed their frontier togs. He called on his friend Mary McNeil and told her that a brother officer, who had never before been in St. Louis, had come with him from the Indian country. Mary suggested a party of four for dinner at her house, and said she would invite one of her girl friends to meet the stranger.

Molly Pettes was the girl; and DeWitt, who had passed unscathed through the Civil War and the social cam-

paings of the national capital and Atlanta, was hard hit at last.

The dinner at Mary McNeil's was the first of a series of happy gatherings, and by the end of the two weeks' vacation DeWitt had persuaded Molly and Mary to visit Madison together the following summer. His uncle, James R. Mears, lived in a big stone house at Carroll and Gilman Streets in Madison, and DeWitt was sure he could arrange with his Aunt Lois (Lois Newton Mears) to chaperon the girls and have them as guests in her home.

When DeWitt returned to Whetstone, he carried with him the mental picture of a girl of nineteen with brown, laughing eyes, a ready but kindly wit, and a seriousness that was happily coupled with a love of fun and social activity. Shortly after his arrival he sent the following letter back down the Missouri to St. Louis:

Whetstone Agency,
Near Fort Randall, D.T.
February 13, 1870

My friend Miss Pettes,

You see I am keeping my promise and enclose the photographs of some of the notable Red men of this latitude. As you admire uniforms I am happy to find that these "Mr. Lo's" have prepared themselves accordingly. They are very fair specimens of my associates, which may account for my wild actions while in St. Louis in the character of a "gay boy."

Of course you will not forget your promise—I have not

Whetstone Agency
near Fort Ransall D.T.

My friend Miss Pitts. February 13th 1870
You see I am keeping

my promise. And enclose the
photographs of some of the notable
'Red men' of this latitude. As
you admire uniforms I am
happy to find that these 'Mr. S.'
have prepared themselves accordingly.

Hoping that I may have
the pleasure of hearing from you
directly.

I am very truly your friend

Leahy C. Pook
M. J. Army

heard from Madison, Wisconsin, but am making arrangements to have most delightful weather and as pleasant company, fine boating and drives, as the most exacting tourist could desire.

Miss McNeil will find it very dull and dusty in the month of July on the plains, tho Major Grimes may be never so entertaining.

I send this thru my friend Major Van Voast, believing that he will take great pleasure in delivering the same in person.

Hoping that I may have the pleasure of hearing from you direct,

I am very truly your friend

DeWitt C. Poole

U. S. Army

In his old scrapbook is pasted a faded newspaper clipping that DeWitt must have placed there shortly after his return from those happy weeks in St. Louis to his lonely life among the Indians:

SOLITAIRE

Alone, alone, I sit in my room,
And shuffle, and cut, and deal,
Sipping my wine till its rich maroon
A flame in my cheeks I feel.
Only a face like mine in the glass,
That glares at mine through the smoke,
That smiles at me, and bows as I pass,
Enjoying the silent joke.
The ashes fall from my spent cigar,
And half asleep in my chair,
I shuffle and think what fools we are,
Who learn to play Solitaire!

Only a two-handed game of life would suit him now,
and the second stanza starts off:

I sigh for a lip to touch the glass,
And sip its nectar with mine.
The thrill of a voice and the sound of a kiss
To mingle with my wine.

And then the appropriate jingle ends:

It was not good in Eden alone
For Adam's bachelorhood;
If they can rob my ribs of a bone
I wish to heaven they would.
My anxious heart is desolate,
Oh, ye unpitying fair!
For your gracious smile, must I longer wait?
I'm weary of Solitaire!



Molly Pettes

AT THE TIME OF HER MARRIAGE

Chapter XIV

WASHINGTON INTERLUDE

I

THE northern spring in that year 1870 was welcomed by DeWitt with more than usual delight. The primitive buildings of the agency were just the same, but, as the snow disappeared, instead of the brown, dried stubble of the reservation and, beyond it, the black, burned prairie of the autumn before, he beheld the fresh green of the new grass that covered the land. The young Indian bucks were dreaming of scalps and stolen horses, of glory and renown, and of future chieftainships; but their agent was dreaming of St. Louis and Molly. In his mind and heart there were many conflicting thoughts and emotions. Danger of an Indian uprising was imminent, and here he was—in love!

In the midst of the many uncertainties, DeWitt received an order from the Department of the Interior to proceed to Washington without delay and to bring with him Spotted Tail, Swift Bear, two principal warriors, and an interpreter. President Grant wished, if possible, to impress the leading chiefs of the Sioux with the power and resources of the country, so that despite encroachments on their lands and other violations of the treaty, which

were multiplying daily, they would think twice before going on the warpath. A similar order had been sent to the officer in charge of Red Cloud Agency, and in May both groups of Indians arrived in the nation's capital for a conference with their Great White Father. There was some delay before the start was made, however, and for a time it looked as though DeWitt would have difficulty in complying with the President's command. Says DeWitt:

I first selected an interpreter, Charles E. Gueru, a Frenchman from France (a term used on the river in contradistinction to a Frenchman from Canada), who had long been associated with the Sioux, having first come among them under the auspices of the old North-Western Fur Company. He was perfectly familiar with their language and customs, and, having married a Brule Sioux woman, was looked upon as belonging to that band. With his assistance I chose the warriors, somewhat with reference to their known friendship for Spotted Tail. Swift Bear was also a firm friend of the latter.

I then sent word to the chiefs and warriors concerned that I wanted to see them, and, upon their arrival, informed them for the first time of the order which I had received. I was somewhat astonished to hear that they did not care to visit their Great Father in Washington who, as they understood, lived a great way off, much farther than they cared to go; if he wanted to see them, he might at least come half way. They remained steadfast in this decision, and finally departed without giving their consent to make the visit. Spotted Tail, however, went back to his camp with the understanding that he should return in a few days.

The subject was allowed to rest, although it was soon noised

abroad that the Great Father desired to see some of the principal chiefs and warriors, and I had to listen to several applications, made by ambitious braves who thought that they were as good representatives as the ones already invited who did not desire to go. Fortunately, there was but one answer to make, which lessened complications, and this was that the President had sent for the ones he wanted to see, and that I could not take anyone else until he should order me to do so.

At the end of three days Spotted Tail was again at the Agency, and I had an interview with him by himself upon the subject of the visit; but he was still disinclined to accept the invitation. His principal reason for refusing was that he would probably see a great many things which would be new and strange to him, and upon his return his friends would come to his lodge and ask him to tell what he had seen, and that while he might give a true account, his hearers, after they had listened a while, would leave his lodge, one by one, and say to his friends, "Spotted Tail tells lies since he has been to the Great Father's country, and the white men he has seen have made bad medicine for him." In the end there would be none coming to his lodge, and he would be left alone—meaning that he would lose his chieftainship.

I reminded him that he had often told me of his desire to help his people, but now, when he had the opportunity to do so, he seemed disinclined to make good his assertions; that he could see the Great Father and many things new and strange to him, but that he need not talk about them on his return but merely tell his friends what the Great Father had said, and that any promises the Great Father might make I was sure would be followed.

He was inclined to be persuaded, but wanted an interview with Swift Bear before fully deciding. The next day he called and informed me that he and Swift Bear had decided to go.

There was no trouble about the warriors; they would follow the chiefs. . . .

The warriors selected were Fast Bear, a Brule, and Yellow Hair, an Oglala. The former was known as an influential warrior in Spotted Tail's camp, while Yellow Hair had made himself conspicuous a short time before by an encounter in Fire Thunder's camp, in which he had killed his assailant, and had thus still further established his reputation among the Indians as a great warrior.

Consent of the chiefs having been obtained and all arrangements having been made for the trip across the plains, there were other important details to be attended to by the agent:

The Indians were offered clothing similar to that of white men, but preferred their own. Exposure of the copper-colored skin of the Sioux warrior does not seem out of place in his own home; but now that he was to journey to another land and among people whose ideas of dress differed entirely from his own, some additions must be made to his ordinary costume of blanket, leggins, breechcloth and mocassins, in order to make him presentable. So shirts were provided, and as the Indians put them on as flowing robes, with no part tucked away, they made a considerable covering. They did not harmonize with the native costume, particularly while the wearers were still among their friends, but use soon familiarized the change. Some cover for the head was suggested, but that was too much of an innovation for the present.

Transportation by the river was uncertain, as it was early in the season and steamboats had not yet completed their long trips up the river so as to be returning. There was no stage, but one was improvised out of a rough lumber wagon.

On the 17th day of May, the day appointed for our departure, the party presented themselves, each carrying a small sack made of dressed hide and containing personal effects . . . We were escorted to the bank of the river, which we were to cross, by a large group of Indians, mostly women, prominent among whom were the wives of the travelers. All the squaws chanted farewells in their usual piercing voices, which could be heard long after we had reached the opposite bank of the Missouri and were on our way across the prairie.

Thence the party proceeded to the little settlement of White Swan containing an Indian trader's store and a ranch house used as the headquarters of the stage company, where a band of Yankton Indians called on Spotted Tail. The interview was necessarily brief inasmuch as sixty miles lay between this point and Yankton. The principal chief of the Yankton Sioux, Strike-the-Ree, had many things to say and various messages to send by Spotted Tail to his Great Father. He also loaned a pipe to be used in the council at Washington.

2

DeWitt and his charges arrived in Yankton late in the evening. It was the largest town ever seen by any of the Indians except Spotted Tail, who some years before had been confined as a prisoner of war at Fort Leavenworth. The whole town was out in force to greet the visitors. The Indians shook hands and said "How," but, according to DeWitt, soon put on their most approved stoical looks

and undemonstrative manner. During the day they had been talking and laughing and observing everything, but now they went into their shells and stayed there, and were not to be drawn out by any remarks, some of which were complimentary, some pitying, and some savage. The narrative continues:

The party had still sixty-five miles to travel by stage before reaching Sioux City and the railroad. While the stage company was perfectly willing to accept our six fares, they would not guarantee seats, but proposed merely the same privileges that they offered to the general public, namely, to get a seat anywhere on the conveyance, inside or out, or to walk or run while holding on behind. The honored chiefs and warriors of an aboriginal State could not be subjected to such vicissitudes while they were guests of an enlightened nation; therefore private conveyances were obtained, and we were soon on our way to a land where stages were fast going out of fashion. . . . Crossing the Big Sioux we drove into Sioux City. Here we passed the night at the St. Elmo, with about the same experience as at Yankton, and next morning took passage on the cars drawn by the Indian's "fire horse." Spotted Tail and Swift Bear had, a few years before, been honored by short rides on the Union Pacific Railroad at North Platte Station; but the warriors, Fast Bear and Yellow Hair, had never traveled faster than a pony's gallop.

At Missouri Valley Junction we struck the Northwestern Railroad. Here the Indians were introduced to that modern luxury of travel, a sleeping car, and had a stateroom to themselves, the privacy of which they thoroughly enjoyed, as in their short ride from Sioux City they had been subjected to much annoyance from inquisitive passengers. . . . The pres-



1870.

CAPT. D. C. POOLE, U.S.A. (*upper right*) WITH HIS INTERPRETER,

CHARLES GUERU, AND PARTY OF SIOUX INDIANS

(*left to right*) FAST BEAR, WARRIOR; SPOTTED TAIL, HEAD CHIEF;

CHIEF DEAR GUERU. ONLY ONE HAIR BRADDOCK

ence of the Indians aroused the ire of the hardy frontiersman, as much as it did the curiosity of other passengers. He was, perhaps, still stinging under losses at the hands of Indians, and gave his opinion of how they should be treated; usually in the direction of the speediest extermination. He would hang them, shoot them, burn them, or anything else to eliminate them, closing these gentle suggestions with a few oaths and a glare upon those present, as much as to say he was looking for the man who differed from him.

In the stateroom of the sleeping car the Indians escaped these annoyances, and passed the time in their usual way—chatting, story telling, and observing what was going on around them. After eighteen hours on the Northwestern road, we arrived in Chicago and were well cared for at the old Tremont, the prince of hotels before the great fire of 1871. . . .

Leaving Chicago we proceed on our journey in the same comfortable manner; the Indians occupying a stateroom in the Pullman car. They are fast becoming educated in their tastes, but in any just appreciation of their surroundings are children still. They have no conception of the fact that each hour they are traveling what would be to them an ordinary day's journey on their ambling ponies. It never enters their minds to make any comparisons between their present luxurious surroundings of polished wood, rich tapestries, and gilded cornices with the rude interior of their smoky tepees. To them the horse is still the perfection of means of locomotion, and the tepee unsurpassed as a haven of rest and comfort. What care they for railroads and gorgeous upholstery. These contrivances of white men . . . arouse no more than a slight curiosity.

As the train speeds eastward DeWitt dreams of the girl in St. Louis to whom he has given his heart. He is keeping her informed as the miles lengthen between them:

We are now passing through States whose inhabitants have long since forgotten the savage war whoop and bloody trail familiar to their ancestors. By the policy of that day and the treaties of that time, the Indians had been removed from occupation of this land to the unknown West, there, in time, to harass by their presence another generation of frontiersmen, who, in their turn, strive to drive the red men still farther west from what has now become a neighboring State. The original inhabitants of these States, so far as they were concerned, solved the ever-recurring Indian question by having the Indian removed from their own immediate neighborhood, and their descendants eventually forgot his existence, save in history and legend.

So, now, our visiting party are interviewed by a more kindly-disposed people, who begin to talk entirely of the wrongs done to the Indian, how he has been cheated by the Government and its agents and robbed and killed by the pioneer, and more than intimate that he would make a good friend and neighbor if he had not been cheated and driven away from his home, and could now live there in the moral atmosphere of the present. The past has always been entirely wrong in its treatment of the Indian. Agricultural implements and seeds and morality are all that are needed now to change the savage, held at bay somewhere in the West, to a peaceful and law-abiding citizen. A far-off view of the original occupant of the land enables them to see both sides of the question, and to realize that the Indian *has* been driven from boundary to boundary across each State until, now that he can go no farther, he has turned back again to shame past generations who were governed too much by self interest and not enough by the philanthropic views of the present inhabitants of the land.

Spotted Tail and his followers were weary and worn by the long journey when they arrived in Washington, and were given a day of rest in their hotel before they paid any official visits. It was not until now that they were told they were to be joined by some of their brothers and neighbors under the famous Red Cloud. Invitations of every kind began pouring in upon them; they were urged to visit this exhibition and that, to attend all sorts of gatherings, festivals, and charitable affairs. When Spotted Tail was asked to attend these festivities he invariably declined. A delay in the arrangements for the expected visit to the White House caused him to become impatient, and he complained that he had not come to Washington to be made a show of, but to see the Great White Father and then return to his people.

Meanwhile a whole flock of photographers descended upon the Indians and tried to prevail upon them to sit for their pictures, but the entire party refused. Spotted Tail himself said that he considered it "bad medicine," which in Indian parlance meant that to submit would inevitably bring "bad luck." "A gentleman from the Smithsonian Institute," said DeWitt in a letter to Molly, "labored long and faithfully to obtain a plaster of Paris model of Spotted Tail's head. Mr. Guern, the interpreter, endeavored to obtain Spotted Tail's consent to

submit to the preliminaries, and offered himself to be experimented upon to show the process. The Indians watched with the greatest interest while the interpreter lay prostrate with quills stuck in his nostrils and with a coating of plaster upon his face. They considered the operation great fun, but decided that it was bad medicine, and no amount of persuasion could change their minds." DeWitt related another amusing incident:

A reverend gentleman called to pay his respects, and being admitted to a room in which the Indians were seated, passed from one to another making some remark to each; commenting on their journey hither, hoping that they were enjoying themselves, and trusting that they would find their visit pleasant and profitable in every way. He then took a position in the center of the room and commenced a lecture, opening by remarking that it afforded him great pleasure to see them and talk with them, as he had long held the theory that they were descendants of the ancient Israelites; that many of their present customs were similar to those of the latter, and he was going on to explain the route which the Israelites must have taken to reach this continent when I interrupted the lecturer to inform him that the Indians did not understand the English language, and that any remarks he made would have to be interpreted. This was quite a surprise to the gentleman, but he was introduced to the interpreter, through whom he continued his discourse, and the latter had to translate many strange words into the Sioux language. The chiefs and warriors made no reply whatever. To all appearances they would have been as much interested in the demonstration of a problem from Euclid as in the question of their Jewish descent. Spotted Tail was searching

for more supplies and a new agency and not after the origin of his ancient progenitors, whoever they might be.

There was no end to their visitors. A delegation of Cherokees from the Indian Territory called and had to enter into a description of themselves, through the interpreter, to convince the Dakota delegation that they were real Indians. The blood of the Cherokees had been mingled with that of white men until but little of the former was left; but they still talked of unfulfilled treaties with the white man's government, so there was this bond of common interest between them and the Sioux.

Red Cloud and his party were provided with accommodations at the same hotel with Spotted Tail. DeWitt feared that there might be some disagreeable show of enmity when the two chiefs met, because of the affray in which Spotted Tail had killed Big Mouth, a close relative of Red Cloud; but there was no demonstration whatever of resentment or antipathy. The chief of the Ogllalas greeted the chief of the Brules with evident cordiality, and they shook hands with a show of warmth, each saying, "How." The greeting over, they subsided into a pleasant chat as though nothing serious had occurred. It was obvious by his actions that Red Cloud felt that Spotted Tail had sufficiently expiated his act of killing Big Mouth, by making prompt payment of the stipulated number of ponies. To Red Cloud, the aboriginal law had been vindicated.

Both groups of Indians were escorted to the White House and given a private audience with the President. After the customary handshaking they were given seats, and President Grant talked to them in a plain, direct way that held their close attention as each sentence was translated for them. He assured them of the Government's good intention to fulfill its part of the treaty and of his own earnest desire that they believe him to be their friend; but, he went on to explain, he was dependent upon Congress to furnish the money to be expended for their benefit, and hoped that sufficient funds would soon be appropriated to meet their wants.

Spotted Tail was called upon to speak, and DeWitt reports that "Old Spot" made a very fair and convincing statement of his case. Here was this grim old chieftain of the prairies in the presence of the Great White Father, where he had never been before, pleading for his people and asking that the spirit and the letter of the treaty be observed. That he was himself impressed by the importance of his task was evidenced by the restraint he showed while enumerating many incidents of its violation. With great dignity he reminded the President of the provisions of the treaty which, he said, his people had tried earnestly to live up to, notwithstanding the fact

that many white men were acting as if no treaty had ever been signed.

Among other things he wanted the agency moved from Whetstone, where there was altogether too much whiskey, to some point distant from the Missouri River. He made no allusions to himself but talked of his people and their needs, especially emphasizing that liquor was creating physical and moral havoc among the young men of his tribe. No prohibitionist ever made a more ardent plea for the banishment of John Barleycorn than did this resolute old Indian chief who was all too well aware of alcohol's destructive effect upon his warriors. As a faithful advocate he won the admiration not only of DeWitt but also of the President, who promised Spotted Tail that he should have the agency anywhere he wanted it within the Sioux reservation. In parting, the President gave Spotted Tail a handsome meerschaum pipe with his monogram carved upon it, while the ladies of the White House presented tobacco and a silver matchbox.

From the White House the Indians were taken to the Treasury Building and conducted through its several departments. They were shown vast sums of money stored in the vaults, taken in an elevator to the top floor to see the process of printing bank bills, and thence through the currency department, where they saw scores of girls counting and sorting the various denom-

inations of paper money. The busy afternoon ended on a note of comedy when the Indians returned to their hotel and began to discuss their experiences.

Spotted Tail was much impressed by his interview with the President, but he and Swift Bear could not understand why the Great White Father was waiting to receive money from Congress, as he had said, when they had just seen a large building full of money which belonged to him. The financial problem was explained to them by DeWitt through the interpreter, but they still insisted that they could not comprehend it. Moreover, their visit to the White House had suggested another thought, and this, too, needed to be explained. Why was it that the President had only one wife when there were so many beautiful girls to choose from in the Treasury Department? The white man's law permitted but one wife at a time, DeWitt told them, and even the President could not violate the law. The chiefs and warriors were not impressed, and said they much preferred their own system of marriage.

DeWitt had not been long at Whetstone Agency before he perceived that much of the "Indian trouble" was caused by unscrupulous traders and exploiters. Of these he made short shrift, and it was not long before Spotted Tail and his people were convinced that the new agent was their friend. Even when rumors were rife of a possible uprising, DeWitt made it plain to his wards that

he trusted them. He told them it was his purpose to protect their interests, and his summary dealing with the gentry who were forever preying on the Indians proved to Spotted Tail that this was no idle promise. The trip from Whetstone to Washington gave added proof of the agent's solicitude, especially during a tour which was made to several other Eastern cities after the ceremonies and visits were ended in Washington. These were long and strenuous days for DeWitt, who never relaxed in peace until long after his charges had retired.

Living in closer contact with their agent than when on the reservation, Spotted Tail and his men were drawn to DeWitt because of his sympathy, understanding, and spirit of good fellowship. Wherever the party went he protected them against intrusion or insult, and when persistent visitors tried to press their unwanted attentions upon the Indians, he courteously but firmly closed the interview and escorted the intruders to the door. Every provision having been made by the Government for the comfort of the delegation, DeWitt in his personal supervision of the tour permitted no attention to be slighted. His charges treated DeWitt with a respect which only the dignity of the Indian can bestow, and the close bond of friendship which the Washington trip cemented was to serve them mutually when they returned to the reservation.

The addition of Red Cloud's party, which contained

several squaws, increased the number of Indians to twenty, so that the upper part of the old Beverly House in Washington was crowded with nomads. The sidewalk in front of the hotel was thronged day and night with spectators eager to catch a glimpse of the visitors, and the assistance of police was often required to clear a path to the carriages whenever they went calling or sightseeing. Instructions had been given to allow the Indians every opportunity to see all objects of interest, but so far as DeWitt could ascertain they did not desire to see anything, and so he took them to such places as he thought might amuse and instruct them:

The Smithsonian Institute afforded them a day of entertainment in looking over the stuffed birds and animals, and the various arms and utensils collected from different parts of the world. Any animal or bird with which they were familiar reminded them of their prairie home and caused many animated discussions. Catlin's collection of portraits of Western Indians made a study for them. They readily singled out the members of different tribes, many of whom it would have afforded them great pleasure to kill and scalp could they have been found lurking about the Institute in flesh and blood.

They visited the theatre for the first time, and amid brilliant lights and the bright colors of the decorator's art, and in the presence of the audience, were calm and stoical as usual. The stormy passion of the hero in the play and the stealthy tread of the heavily whiskered, rouged and armed villain interested them; and the subsequent encounter between the two, with swords clashing together with such force as to bring sparks of fire from their blades, fixed their attention; or when fire-

arms were the deadly weapons in the contest and were discharged at such an elevation above the victim as would lead them to suppose that his vulnerable parts were hidden away somewhere in the flies, they were amused and astonished to see the victim fall dead at the discharge; but they were not wrought up to any degree of emotion. Their medicine men could handle a long knife or a gun more dexterously to deceive, and the whole scenic effect fell far below the wild pantomime of the war dance.

A call on the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, visits to the House and Senate when they were in session, a trip through the Botanical Gardens and the Patent Office, and a sail down the Potomac to Mount Vernon, where they saw the tomb of the first Great White Father, were among their many adventures in and about the capital while waiting to be entertained again at the White House.

5

The evening of June 6 was a gala event which they would not soon forget. They were driven from the hotel to the White House in open barouches, and upon arriving were taken to the East Room. All the braves wore their usual dark-blue blankets embroidered with beads, and leggins and moccasins similarly adorned, while the squaws were attired in plain calico dresses without embroidery or other ornamentation. Spotted Tail and his party contented themselves with putting on

clean white shirts, rearranging their hair with its simple eagle feather, and using a modest quantity of paint; but Red Cloud and his warriors donned their eagle-feather headdresses with trains extending from the head to the ground.

All were dazzled by the brilliance of the massive chandeliers whose pendant prisms reflected a hundred lights, and by the rich curtains and Turkish carpets. Presently the massive folding doors were thrown open and the President entered, accompanied by his wife and daughter and followed by members of his cabinet, the diplomatic corps and their wives, and members of Congress. At a signal from the Commissioner of the Indian Bureau, the interpreter began introducing the Indians, beginning with "Old Spot," who bowed gracefully. As the delegation filed past the presidential party, each shook hands and gave the usual salutation, "How." President Grant made a brief address, and, with this short ceremony ended, the Indians retired to their side of the room. Then the President, with the interpreter beside him, spoke to each of his guests. Soon all were mingling together, some of the Indians trying to hold conversations without the aid of the interpreter, but with little success in making themselves understood.

To the foreign diplomats and their wives the squaws were objects of lively interest. The crude ornaments and grotesque dress worn by the Indians were examined,

and the squaws and the braves, in turn, admired the evening gowns of all the white women present. The wife of the Italian Minister, who wore a gown beautifully ornamented with Roman pearls, tore off a rich pearl fringe and gave a piece to each of them. Highly pleased, they deposited the souvenirs somewhere within the folds of their blankets. A buffet supper in the state dining room completed the evening's festivities, and the Indians and their escorts departed, deeply impressed by the magnificence of the house of their Great White Father.

On the morrow there was a final round of visits and a last conference with the Secretary of the Interior, who promised that each of the guests should be given a horse to ride back to the reservation when they had left the train. Departing from Washington, they started the long transcontinental journey with brief stopovers at Philadelphia and New York, in both of which cities they were fêted and dined and shown the sights. Chicago again turned out to greet the party, and at Sioux City the promised horses were purchased and shipped to Yankton.

At Sioux City word was awaiting Spotted Tail that his favorite wife was desperately sick in the Brule camp, and he was anxious to make the rest of the journey as quickly as possible. Apparently all were weary of the whirl of excitement into which they had been thrust—DeWitt no less than the others. But there was another

reason for his wanting to get his charges back to Whetstone without further delay. Molly Pettes and Mary McNeil would soon be on their way to Madison.

At Fort Randall, Spotted Tail heard of the death of his favorite wife. Sorrowfully the Indians continued on the last leg of the journey. Arriving at the agency, Swift Bear, Yellow Hair, and Fast Bear disappeared among their friends, leaving Spotted Tail to go alone to his camp in sadness and despair. He gave away his fine horse, saddle, and bridle, while his well-packed trunk, filled with presents, was "thrown upon the prairie" as an act expressive of his overwhelming grief.

6

The trip had been a most interesting experience both for the Indians and for the people who saw them, but as a stroke of diplomacy it was a flat failure. Grant tried honestly enough to keep his promises but was unfortunate in his Secretaries of the Interior, save one, Jacob D. Cox, who served for only a year and a half in his first cabinet. Presumably it had been Cox's suggestion that led to the order directing DeWitt to bring his charges to Washington. Urgent demands for reform had been bombarding the Administration, and the Board of Indian Commissioners, appointed in 1869, already had made its first report, which held that the Government's dealings with the Indians were stupid, unjust, and in-

excusable. Indian agents and unscrupulous contractors, not the settlers and frontiersmen, had been chiefly responsible for conditions that so soon were to plunge the West into an almost uninterrupted series of Indian uprisings.

Had Cox remained in office to carry out Grant's policy of conciliation, there would have been no "Custer Massacre" on the Little Big Horn in 1876. Grant had resolved to set up a stricter supervision of traders within the reservations, to prohibit white men from hunting buffalo on the Indians' lands, and, above all, to root out the desperadoes and horse thieves who had long been preying on the red men.

Cox resigned in December, 1870, and was succeeded by a hack politician named Columbus Delano. During his term various scandals developed and continued unabated until 1875. In that year a group led by Professor Othniel C. Marsh, of Yale University, charged Delano with corruption and rascality in distributing supplies at Red Cloud Agency. Delano resigned under fire and the charges were never officially aired. Other troubles, too, were brewing. All the protestations of friendship and promises of fair treatment for the Indians were by now lost in a shuffle of charges of graft that led directly to the door of the cabinet itself. Grant had been made the victim of unconscionable adventurers, iniquitous officeholders, and other shameless freebooters in the

public service. In the midst of the hostility aroused against his administration, the plight of the Indians seemed remote, and was soon forgotten in the stormy political passions of the day. But in that sinister time the country was storing up trouble for itself. Around the Indian campfires in the West, councils were being held, and with hushed voices men were speaking in strange and fearful tongues.

Chapter XV

MOLLY

I

IN December, 1870, having been relieved from duty with the Indian service and assigned to the Twenty-second United States Infantry, DeWitt took leave of the Sioux at Whetstone Agency and reported for duty at Fort Randall, Dakota, the headquarters of his regiment. His vacation in Madison during the previous summer had evidently been both pleasant and successful, for in April, 1871, the last of a long series of letters written to Molly ends with these significant words:

In a little less than two weeks I shall be on the way to St. Louis and shall soon be in the presence of my little girl and dear wife. My letters grow less and less interesting, but I have a thousand things to say when you are again seated by my side.

I kiss and embrace you.

Good-bye,

DeWitt

2

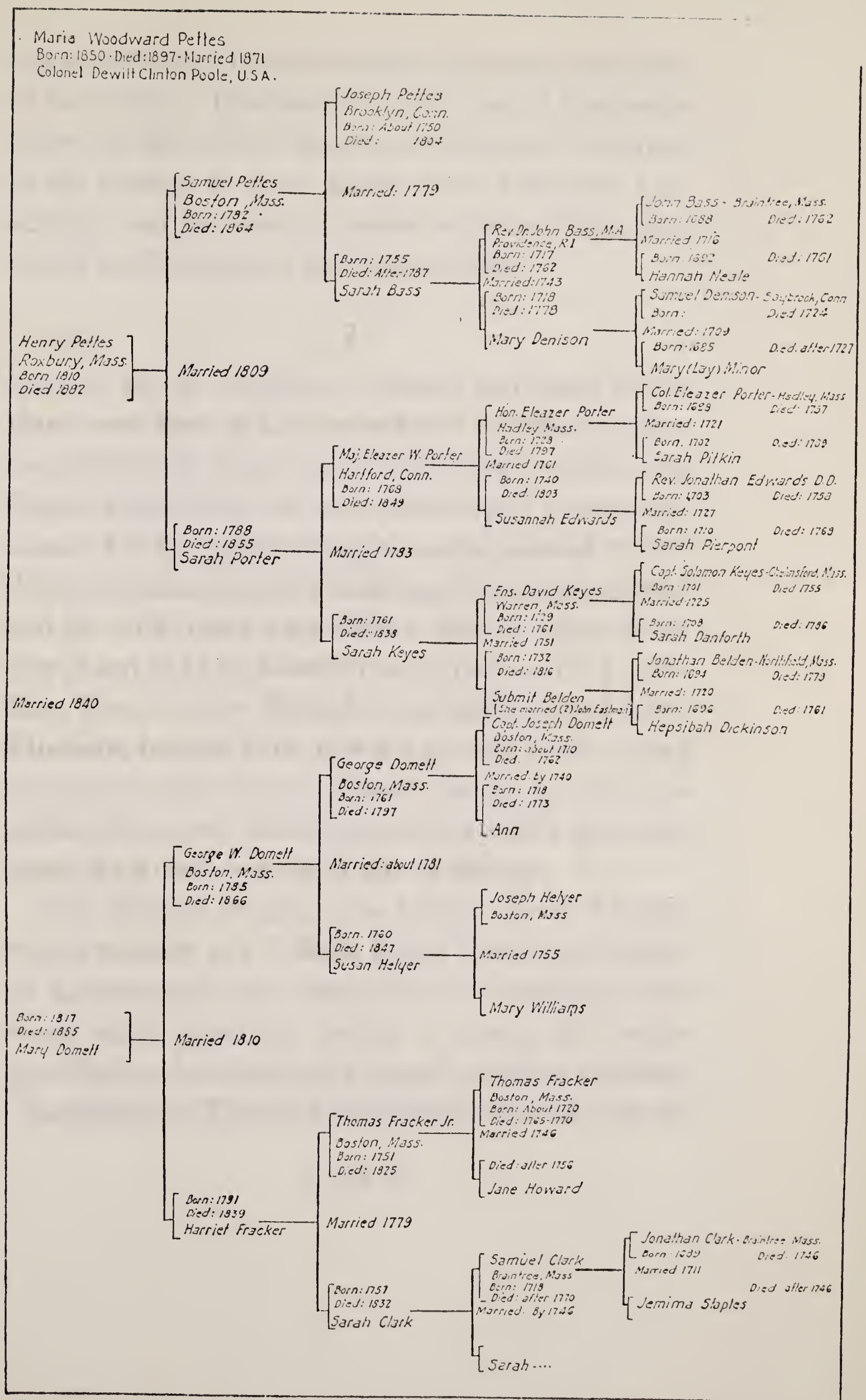
Several of the early chapters of this biography dealt in considerable detail with the families of DeWitt's forbears; and now that his life is to be joined with that of

Molly Pettes, it is time to tell something of her ancestors and of the Boston milieu in which they lived.

Molly, whose full name was Maria Woodward Pettes, was the daughter of Henry Pettes and Mary Domett Pettes, who were married in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1840.

The Pettes line begins in colonial times, and in each generation its members lived lives of simple piety as they helped to create a new civilization and a nation. Midway of the eighteenth century Molly's great-grandfather, Joseph Pettes, was born in Brattleboro, Vermont. We find him in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1778, when he was twenty-eight years old, courting Sarah Bass, daughter of Reverend John Bass, Harvard graduate, minister, and physician. In the following January, Joseph and Sarah were married. Shortly afterward he purchased an acre of land with a house on it in Brooklyn, Connecticut, and thither he took his bride. There he spent the rest of his life as a farmer, and there his three children, two sons and a daughter, were born. Joseph Bass Pettes, the eldest, became a physician, and the other son, Samuel (Molly's grandfather), turned to the law.

Samuel Pettes established himself in Hartford, after his admission to the bar, and there, in 1809, married Sarah Porter, daughter of Major Eleazer Williams Porter, and granddaughter of Judge Eleazer and Susannah (Edwards) Porter, of Hadley, Massachusetts. Susannah



GENEALOGICAL CHART SHOWING THE FIVE GENERATIONS
PRECEDING MARIA WOODWARD PETTES

was a daughter of the most famous American theologian of his century, Jonathan Edwards. One of Susannah's sisters was the wife of Reverend Aaron Burr, President of the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University), and she was the mother of Aaron Burr, one-time Vice President of the United States.

3

Four of the six children of Samuel and Sarah Porter Pettes were born in Connecticut and the others in Boston, whither the family removed in 1818, in which year Samuel forsook the law and entered upon a mercantile career. The household during the early years of its residence in Boston was not a small one; for, besides Samuel and his wife, there were Henry, born in 1810; Sarah Ann, born in 1812; Eleazer Porter, born in 1814; William, born in 1817; Samuel, born in 1819; and Mary Elizabeth, born in 1822. It was a pleasant abode, where aunts and uncles on both sides of the family were frequent visitors, and where friends of the earlier days were entertained whenever they came to the city.

The Petteses attended the Federal Street Church, whose minister was William Ellery Channing, founder of Unitarianism; but, being liberal in theology, they heard other preachers, notably a young man whose grandfather, the minister at Concord, preached a sermon, "Resistance to Tyrants Is Obedience to God," on the

Sunday morning before the British troops marched out from Boston to Lexington and Concord. He was Reverend Ralph Waldo Emerson, colleague of Henry Ware, Jr., pastor of the Second Church.

For several years the Pettes family resided in Jackson Place, a small close leading out of Winter Street, around the corner from Washington Street, and only a few steps from Henry's drygoods store which he opened in 1832 when he was only twenty-two years old. A few years later, their near neighbors, in West Street, were the Peabody girls, who lived upstairs over their father's bookshop: Mary, who was to become the wife of Horace Mann; Sophia, who was to marry Nathaniel Hawthorne; and Elizabeth, who was to remain unmarried and be remembered as the teacher who introduced the kindergarten to America.

It was a time when theology was a topic of general discussion, and a time, too, when novel and strange ideas were being propagated. Another Connecticut Yankee, lately arrived in Boston, had opened his "Temple School" to demonstrate his philosophy in the education of children. He was Amos Bronson Alcott, visionary and mystic, whose daughter Louisa May would, a few years later, write a classic for children, called *Little Women*.

In 1836 the agitation against slavery encountered a violent reaction in Boston. One day Henry Pettes heard



Henry Pelles

From a daguerreotype made in Boston

a commotion in the street, and, stepping out of his store, saw a crowd running toward the Town House. A mob was dragging a man, by a rope around his waist, up Washington Street. Someone said the man was that "irresponsible abolitionist" William Lloyd Garrison, editor and printer of the little weekly paper called *The Liberator*, who worked and slept in his print shop in a loft somewhere down in Water Street. It was a good thing that cooler heads prevailed and that he was rescued from the mob. It would never do, in Boston of all places, for a man to be killed for speaking his mind, said Henry. If Boston could stand old Sam Adams, Father of the Revolution, what was the harm in letting a poor printer have his say?

In 1838 Henry Pettes had been in business six years, and his store was doing well. With more than a dash of enterprise, he was importing the latest "French Goods" from Paris, and the élite of the city, in search of the "last word" in fashions, were his customers. Henry was still unmarried, but it was noticed that he was a frequent visitor at the home of George Washington Domett in Chardon Street. A certain young lady, seven years his junior, lived there, and he was escorting her to church every Sunday evening. Nineteen-year-old Mary Domett was her mother's constant companion, but on Sunday evenings she and Henry would slip away and hear Reverend Chandler Robbins preach. Robbins, who was just

Henry's age, had succeeded Emerson as pastor of the old Second Church. It was he who performed the marriage ceremony uniting Henry and Mary, in Cambridge, November 12, 1840.

With the blood of colonial preachers in the veins of the Petteses, his relatives were not astonished when young Samuel turned his thoughts toward the ministry. It was time for another preacher to be cropping up in the family and Henry was proud of his studious brother. If Sam wanted to become a clergyman, Henry would pay his tuition. There was a family council, and as the result Samuel Pettes entered the Harvard Divinity School.

He was graduated in 1842, and on May 8, 1844, was ordained and installed as pastor of the First Congregational Society, the Unitarian church in Sharon, Massachusetts, where he remained four years. In 1850 he was called to the First Church, Unitarian, of Billerica. Molly was only a month old when her Uncle Samuel preached his first sermon as minister of this historic church. Her father went up by train the day before and stayed at the parsonage, for Sam was unmarried and was to remain a bachelor to the end of his days. Sam was in Billerica five years, and then he accepted a call to Chicopee, in the western part of the state.

At the end of another five years their mother would be dead, the rest of the family would be scattered,



Mary Demott Pettes
From a daguerreotype made in Boston

and Henry would be more than a thousand miles away, in St. Louis, when he received word that Samuel had passed away. Their aged father would be alone with him in the parsonage when the end came, and after the service in the church would take him back across the state to Boston for burial beside his mother in the family plot in Forest Hills Cemetery. Four years later, at the age of eighty-two, he too would join them in death.

4

Molly's paternal great-great-grandfather was Reverend John Bass of Braintree, a lineal descendant of John and Priscilla Alden of the "Mayflower." Of the fourth generation of the family to bear the name John, he was a great-great-grandson of Deacon Samuel Bass, progenitor of the family in America, who was born in England in 1600, and died in Braintree in 1694.

Reverend John Bass was born March 26, 1717, in Braintree, Massachusetts. He prepared for college by reading the classics and studying mathematics with Reverend John Hancock, minister of the First Church of Braintree, and father of the famed Revolutionist of the same name who affixed his large and flowing signature to the Declaration of Independence. At the age of seventeen, John Bass was admitted as a freshman at Harvard and received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1737, the year the future statesman of the Hancock family was

born. For several years John Bass taught school in Weymouth, obtaining his master's degree at Harvard in 1740, and filling various pulpits as a "supply pastor" for several years.

In 1743 he became a candidate for the pastorate of a church in Ashford, Connecticut, and his experiences during the following eight years give an interesting picture of the Calvinistic intolerance that still prevailed in the churches of New England at that time. Five members of the Ashford Church were appointed "to treat with Mr. John Bass about his principles and discipline." Forty-four members voted to invite him to be their minister, but twenty-two, thinking that they had detected some heterodoxy in his sermons, "wished a longer time to hear him and be acquainted with him."

His sermons having been carefully examined by a council of ministers and found to contain no tinge of heresy, the town, by an affirmative vote of eighty-three, finally offered him the charge at a salary of £200 a year. Although the minority still questioned his orthodoxy, he accepted the call, and September 7 was set for his ordination. The day was so hot and there was "such a vast concourse of people assembled" that the service was held on the village green. His friend and pastor, "Reverend Mr. Hancock, of Braintree," preached the ordination sermon.

Theologically, Reverend John Bass was more than a

century and a half ahead of his time. He was what today would be called a modernist. Although his preaching was acceptable to the majority of the congregation, his broad interpretations of the Bible soon got him into trouble with a powerful group of doctrinal detectives, and councils of ministers were continually called to pass upon many points of the theories he was expounding. A sermon in which he advised his congregation to make "careful, unprejudiced inquiry after the will of God as revealed in the Bible," and to re-examine their faith in the light of the inquiry, shocked the heresy-hunters, who promptly wrote him a letter setting forth their grievances:

We think you are gone from what you profest to the Council that ordained you, in the matter of Original Sin. You then profest to believe, That it was not only our infelicity, but our Sin, that we fell in Adam; and now you seem to hold only the depravity, and deny the Guilt; it appears to us by your preaching, praying and conversation. In your preaching you neglect to preach the doctrine of Original Sin. . . . Also a further confirmation of your holding the same principle is, When you baptize children you don't so much as mention one word of the child's being guilty of Sin, or any other words, that represent the child being Guilty of Original Sin.

On this "sifting question" of infant damnation, one of the signers of the letter asked: "Sir, don't you think that a child brings sin enough into the world with it to damn it forever?" "I do not," said John Bass. This was sufficient evidence of John's doctrinal dereliction. The

Ministerial Association was convened to consider his case and to "discourse with Brother Bass in order to give him Light and recover him." Brother Bass apparently did not want that kind of light, and the association summoned the Consociation for final decision. The action of his ministerial brethren is given in an entry which John himself made in the church records:

June 5, 1751. I was dismissed from my pastoral relation to the church and people of Ashford, by the Rev. Consociation of the County of Windham, for dissenting from the Calvinistic sense of the Quinquarticular Points, which I ignorantly subscribed to before my ordination; for which, and all my other mistakes, I beg the pardon of Almighty God.

Having written a pamphlet entitled "A True Narrative of an Unhappy Contention in the Church at Ashford, and the Several Methods Used to Bring It to a Period," John published it, and, with this parting shot as a heretic, moved with his wife and two children to Providence, where he was installed as minister of the Congregational Society. His ministry there was short and is summed up in this brief record:

In the spring of 1752, Mr. John Bass, before of Ashford, in the Colony of Conn., moved into the town, who supplied them with preaching til about the year 1758, when by reason of ill health . . . he gave up the business, and entered upon the practice of Physic.

During these years, presumably, he studied medicine in some physician's office, as was then the custom. But

he had other interests as well, for *Thayer's Memorial* (1835) said of him: "He was a man of great mathematical genius." Three months after his ordination John Bass married Mistress Mary Denison, a descendant of John Howland of the "Mayflower." He died in October, 1762, at the age of forty-five, leaving his wife and five minor children, one of whom, Sarah, married Joseph Pettes.

5

On her mother's side Molly was descended from other pre-Revolutionary stock, the Dometts* and the Frackers. The founder of the Domett family in America was Captain Joseph Domett, a mariner, who was born in or about the year 1710, probably in Dorset, in old England. As it was customary in those times for boys going to sea to be sent at an early age, it is likely that Joseph was apprenticed before he had reached his teens. So far as is known, there are no records to throw light on his youth, nor is there anything that shows in what year he made his first voyage to New England. Indeed, he is thirty-one years old before we hear anything of him, and it is probable that he made many crossings before deciding to settle in Boston. He was married by the year 1740, and his wife's name was Anne, but her family name is not known, though there is much circumstantial evidence to indicate that it was Pigeon.

*Domett is pronounced with the accent on the second syllable.

Presumably, Joseph Domett was a captain long before his marriage, inasmuch as many an eighteenth-century seafaring man qualifying for that rank obtained command of a ship while still in his twenties. The first definite fact we have concerning Joseph and Anne is contained in the records of Christ Church, where their first child was christened in 1741. This edifice, still standing in Salem Street in the North End of Boston, was erected in 1723, and as the "Old North Church" is one of the historic shrines of America. From its belfry, on the night of April 18, 1775, Captain John Pulling flashed the signal lights that sent Paul Revere on his immortal ride "through every Middlesex village and farm."

It is not known where Joseph and Anne Domett resided in Boston prior to 1760; probably they lived in rented property till that year, when he purchased "from Richard Buckley and his wife Mary . . . for . . . four hundred and eighty-three pounds six shillings and eight pence . . . A Certain Dwelling House and several Warehouses, Shops and Buildings . . . at the Northerly part of Boston . . . on Fish Street."

It appears that Captain Domett was also a merchant, for it is recorded that he was licensed "to retail Wine and other Spirits," and it is possible that he carried on a general importing business as well. Most likely he conducted it in conjunction with his seafaring, bringing home supplies from the many ports he visited during

his voyages. In his last will and testament, drawn April 16, 1762, he described himself as a "mariner Bound to Sea." Presumably he sailed soon after making his will, and in departing from Boston in the spring of that year, it is probable that he bade his family a last farewell. In its issue for November 4 the *Massachusetts Gazette and Boston News-Letter* contained this three-line obituary: "We have Advice from Martineco of the Death of *Capt. Joseph Domett* of this Town, which is much lamented, as he was a Gentleman greatly respected."

After providing for his wife, he divided the residue of his estate among his three children. "One third part thereof I Give Devise and Bequeath unto my Son Joseph, to be holden by him and his Heirs and assigns forever, he first paying thereout to his Brother & Sister in equal shares the Sum of one hundred Pounds Sterling for and on account of the Liberal Education I have given him."

Anne Domett survived her husband eleven years, dying February 20, 1773, at the age of fifty-five. She was buried in Copp's Hill Burying Ground, then known as the North Burial Ground, not far from Christ Church. A little more than two years later some of the beleaguered inhabitants of Boston stood in this cemetery and watched the Battle of Bunker Hill, across the Charles River. The British had thrown up fortifications near by, and the Redcoats stationed there occasionally amused themselves by firing at the gravestones.

Molly's great-grandfather, George Domett, was not yet fourteen years old on that day in 1775 when the first great battle of the Revolutionary contest was fought. His brother Joseph retained his residence in the North End of Boston till it was confiscated by the Continental authorities in 1779, the year of his banishment as a Tory. It is not known whether the boy George lived with his elder brother after their mother's death; more likely he went to live with John Pigeon, whom Anne Domett had named in her will as guardian of her minor children. Pigeon lived in Newton, a few miles from the provincial capital, and was a merchant, his place of business being in Boston. A strong sympathizer with the Revolutionists, he was driven out of the town when it fell into the hands of the British, but returned when the Redcoats evacuated Boston. The fact that George Domett became a merchant seems to indicate that he received his business training under Pigeon's tutelage.

George was twice married, his first wife dying two years after their marriage and leaving him with a baby girl. He seems to have enjoyed a moderate business success, but his health was poor, and he died in 1797 at the age of thirty-six, leaving his second wife and eight children. His third child, the second of his five boys, born September 27, 1785, was named George Washington.



WEST ST. PEABODY HOME
 WASHINGTON ST. WINTER ST.
 SUMMER ST. COLLEGE ST.
 STORE OF HENRY PETTES

INTEREST

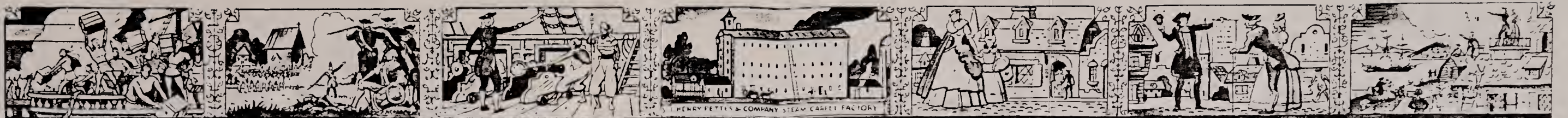
Peabody Home on West St.
 Home of G.W. Domett, Old Marlborough St.
 Home of Joseph Domett, Fish St.
 Home of Thomas Fracker, Ship St.
 Home of Ann St. Union Wharf,
 Thomas Fracker Shipyard



FERRY TO CHANALISTON

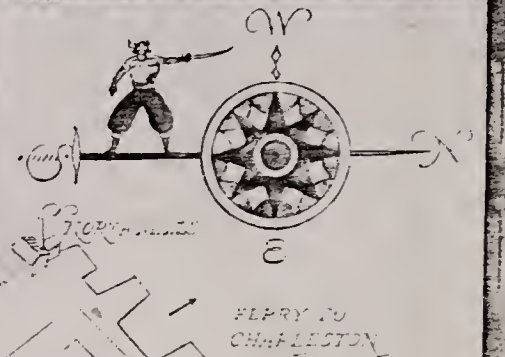


ARBOR



POINTS OF INTEREST

Pettes Home in Jackson Pl. ★ Peabody Home on West St.
Store of Henry Pettes, Summer St. ★ Store of G.W. Domett, Old Marlborough
Home of G.W. Domett, Old Marlborough St. ★ Home of Joseph Domett, Fish St.
Home of Paul Revere, North Sq. ★ House of Thomas Fracker, Ship St.
House in which Thomas Fracker died, Ann St. ★ Union Wharf.
Constitution Wharf. ★ Thomas Fracker Shipyard



With his brothers and sisters George Washington Domett received the average education of his time in the local schools of Boston, and was then apprenticed to learn the saddler's trade. At the age of twenty-four he was in business for himself under the firm name of George Domett & Co. By 1810, the year of his marriage with Harriet Fracker, he had formed a partnership with one Stephen Fairbanks, and the two were carrying on a saddlery business under the name of Domett & Fairbanks, in Marlborough Street, near the Old South Church. This was one of Boston's principal thoroughfares, which later, with two other streets, was renamed Washington Street.

In 1816, the partnership was dissolved, George continuing under his own name, and expanding the business to include the manufacture of whalebone whips and trunks. In 1818 he removed his plant to Dock Square and remained there for the next twenty-two years. In 1840 he sold the business and became a merchandise broker at 86 State Street, continuing in this work until 1849, when he was made superintendent of the Henry Pettes Brussels Carpet Factory in Roxbury.

7

Molly's grandmother, Harriet Fracker, was descended from Thomas Fracker, who was born in England and who emigrated to the Province of Massachusetts Bay in

1746. He died in Boston between the years 1765 and 1770 and is probably the Thomas Fracker who is buried in Copp's Hill Burying Ground. At the time of his death he is recorded as a member of the New North Church in Hanover Street. Thrice married, his first wife was Jane Howard, and their second child, Thomas, was born May 26, 1751. This second Thomas was Molly's great-grandfather. Like the first Joseph Domett, the first Thomas Fracker was a mariner, sailing out of Boston, but the only records concerning him are the meager ones preserved by the New North Church.

Thomas Fracker, Jr., married Betty Clark, of Braintree, in 1777, but she died soon afterward and he married her sister Sarah, who bore him twelve children. One of them he named John Tileston, which leads us to believe that Thomas Fracker, Jr., attended the North Writing School in North Bennett Street, that celebrated early Boston institution with which the famed John Tileston was connected as pupil, usher, and master for a period of eighty years. Paul Revere also attended this school, and upon leaving it entered his father's shop to learn the trade of silversmith. In 1770 Revere purchased the house in North Square which was his home for many years. It was only a short distance from where the Dometts and the Frackers resided, and we may well suppose that, in the provincial town of fewer than 15,000 inhabitants, such as Boston was during the last thirty years of the

eighteenth century, the Dometts and the Frackers must have known the "Messenger of the Revolution."

Thomas Fracker, Jr., learned the trade of shipwright and soon after completing his apprenticeship branched out for himself as a builder of boats. His shipyard was at Union Wharf, in the rear of his house in Ship Street, not far from the wharf where the U.S.S. "Constitution" was launched in 1797. It is reasonable to suppose that as a shipbuilder Thomas witnessed the launching of this earliest of our naval vessels, which was destined to play an immortal role, beginning in the War of 1812.

On Sunday, August 19, 1810, the Fracker family, as usual, attended the New North Church; and immediately after the morning service in the now historic old edifice, Harriet Fracker and George Washington Domett stood before the altar and were married by Reverend John Eliot, a chaplain of the Revolution, who had begun his ministry in 1776.

John Eliot and his friend Jeremy Belknap, Harvard classmate of Joseph Domett, were the organizers of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and for many years, on the anniversary of the evacuation of Boston by the British, Chaplain Eliot had been called upon to offer the invocation at exercises commemorating the departure of the Redcoats. He was now in poor health and seemed like an old man to the Fracker children, though on that August day he was only in his middle

fifties. As they witnessed the marriage ceremony, Thomas and Sarah Fracker must have recalled the Sunday morning in 1791 when Thomas held Harriet in his arms before the same altar while John Eliot baptized her. She was born the eighth of April in that year, and was now nineteen years old.

8

As children, Harriet Fracker and George Washington Donett had lived through what a liberal Boston clergyman of a later day described as "the dryest period in the history of the American pulpit." It was a time of theological transition, when the doctrines of Calvinism were losing their attraction, and the schism in the orthodox Congregational Church was becoming apparent. It was a time of political pessimism, too, and probably the greatest pessimist in all New England was Fisher Ames, a Federalist member of Congress, who described the spread of Jeffersonian principles as "the progress of licentiousness." It has been said of him that his pessimism was "of such a sombre hue that his temper overhung the common consciousness of Boston like a leaden pall." Only lately a group of aristocratic Federalists, known as the "Essex Junto," had been advocating the secession of the New England states, and United States Senator Timothy Pickering had even written from Washington that the time for action had come. To the business

interests of Boston and of the other seaport towns, whose ships had been tied up at the wharves by the recently enacted Nonintercourse Act, Jefferson's name was anathema.

Boston was still very much of a provincial place in 1810, the year in which Henry Pettes was born and in which Harriet Fracker and George Washington Domett were married. Its general appearance was that of an English market town, according to contemporary accounts. Both its sidewalks and streets were roughly paved with cobblestone, over which pedestrians carefully picked their way, and heavy carts and drays bobbed and rumbled with a deafening din. At night the streets were poorly lighted by a few whale-oil lamps, installed as an experiment; and to be on the safe side persons going abroad after dark carried lanterns containing candles, as had their fathers and their grandfathers before them. On Saturday evening boys and girls carried pots of beans and puddings to the bakeshops and called for them early Sunday morning. Fish peddlers still blew their horns in the streets as they went their rounds of customers. Families of seafaring men climbed to the small platforms atop their houses along the waterfront, to wave to fathers, sons, brothers, and sweethearts on ships coming up the bay from long voyages to the far ports of the world.

Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown in 1782, and on
1781

Harriet Fracker's wedding day, it is only twenty-eight years since that great event. Franklin has been in his grave only twenty years; and it is but a decade since Washington died at Mount Vernon. Men are still recalling the speech James Otis made against the Writs of Assistance in the old Town House in 1763. Paul Revere is still living and active, with eight years ahead of him before he will be overtaken by a steed faster than the one he borrowed from Deacon Larkin of Charlestown on that April night in '75. Only a few of his cronies, the handful who are left, can tell what he did, and fifty years will pass before the children of America will be reciting Longfellow's poem that immortalized his exploit. Veterans of the Revolution are still vigorous men, not many of them more than sixty years old. John Tileston, at seventy-three, still rules the North Writing School with an iron hand, and will continue to do so for sixteen more years before his old pupils will attend his funeral from his house in Prince Street and take him to his grave at Copp's Hill.

A queer, gaunt figure wearing a colored coat, knee-breeches, buckled shoes, and a three-cornered hat may be seen any morning tapping his way with a cane over the cobbled sidewalks. He is Major Thomas Melville, a member of the band of young "Indians" that marched from the Old South Meeting House to Griffin's Wharf, one cold night in 1773, and dumped 342 chests of tea

into the bay from vessels just arrived from London. That was when Melville was in his prime. Oliver Wendell Holmes, in his poem "The Last Leaf," will one day write of Melville as he was forty years after the "Boston Tea Party":

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.

9

From the church in Hanover Street, that Sunday afternoon in 1810, George Washington Domett and his bride were escorted by relatives and friends to a house in Marlborough Street which the bridegroom had furnished and made ready for occupancy.

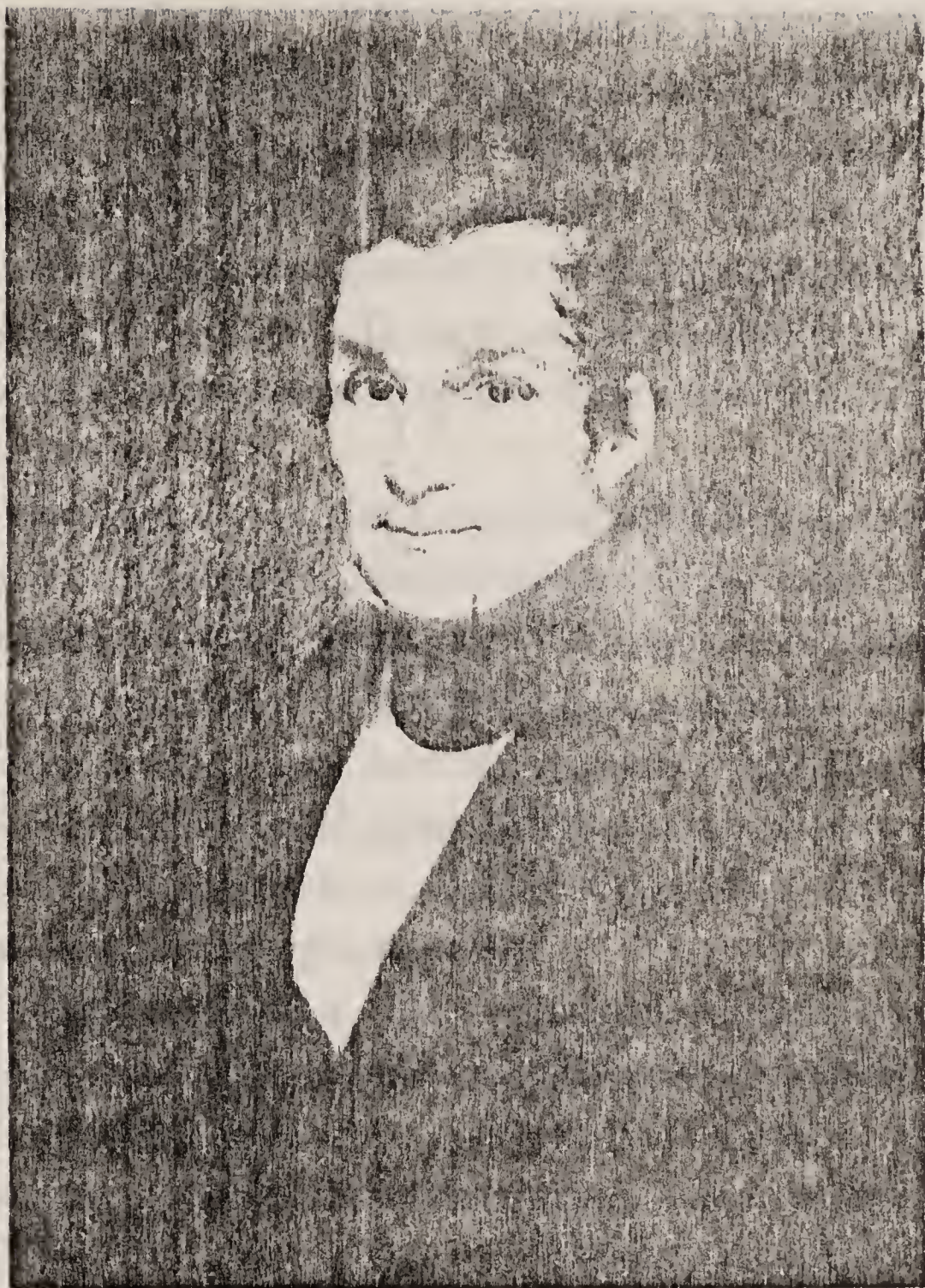
An industrious young man, George applied himself diligently to his manufacturing, but business conditions were uncertain owing to trouble with Great Britain. Violations of our rights of commerce on the high seas, impressment of our sailors, and Indian uprisings on the frontier at Detroit and in Indiana, made disturbing news. The old resentment against the mother country gripped the people again, and the nation continued to drift toward war.

Mr. Madison was re-elected in 1812, and three months

after his inauguration war was declared. Harriet's brother, John Tileston Fracker, was already in the merchant marine, and George Domett's brother Charles, enlisted in a company of Boston Fusiliers. Along the waterfront there was great excitement as supplies were put aboard the privateers. All that summer troops were pouring into Boston and were encamped on the Common. A stringent money situation arose to plague business generally, as the Federal Government had difficulty raising the necessary \$30,000,000 a year to finance the war. As the struggle dragged on, Boston had reason to be disturbed by the news of the seizure, one after another, of her merchant ships, and by the jailing of American sailors in Dartmoor Prison in England.

In the midst of the national stress and turmoil, Harriet's first child was born on January 13, 1813, and was named for her mother. At the time the first of her brood arrived, the venerable John Eliot was desperately sick, too sick to baptize the infant, and the rite was performed by Reverend William Ellery Channing.

In June the war was at the very port of Boston as the American frigate "Chesapeake," ill-fitted for the contest and manned mostly by an inexperienced crew, battled the "Shannon," just outside the harbor. Captain Lawrence's dying words, "Don't give up the ship!" spread through the town and the country, firing the resolution of the people.



George Washington Demell
From a miniature made in 1825

Then came news of Commodore Oliver H. Perry's defeat of the British on Lake Erie and of his message to General Harrison: "We have met the enemy and they are ours—two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop."* New England was delirious with joy. In May, 1814, Commodore Perry visited Boston, and in his honor a public dinner was given at the Exchange Coffee House. George Washington Domett, as one of Boston's young business men, was among the throng that greeted the naval hero.

On February 13, 1815, word reached Boston that the Treaty of Ghent had been signed, and the whole town took on a holiday spirit. On Washington's Birthday an oratorio was sung in King's Chapel, and in the evening Harriet and George saw the "grand illumination" on the Common in celebration of the coming of peace. On May 19, Harriet's second child, Emily, was born, and Doctor Channing baptized her.

There were four other children. Molly's mother, Mary Domett, was born on December 15, 1817, and George Fracker Domett on November 29, 1819. They, too, were baptized by Channing, but for the last two children, Matilda and Henry Williams Domett, the rite was performed by Reverend Henry Ware, Jr., minister

*Twelve years after the Battle of Lake Erie, many of the cannon from these captured British ships were placed along the line of the Erie Canal and fired on October 26, 1825, to announce the "grand opening."

of the Second Church, a forgotten worthy whose local fame during his short life was equaled only by that of his father, a professor in the Harvard Divinity School.

Among the childhood recollections of Henry Pettes and Mary Domett were the visits of Lafayette to Boston: the first on August 24, 1824; the second, when he returned, after a tour of the country, to attend the dedication of the monument on Bunker Hill on the fiftieth anniversary of the battle. Henry and Mary, though they did not then know each other, were among the throngs of school children who gathered with their teachers on Boston Common to see the famed major general of the Revolution ride by in an open barouche, escorted by state and city officials and by a military cavalcade of some twelve hundred horsemen. All the church bells of the city were rung, and salutes were fired by artillery posted on South Boston Heights and on Copp's Hill.

Three months after he attended the ceremonies at Bunker Hill, Thomas Fracker died at his home in Ann Street, September 6, 1825, at the age of seventy-four. His funeral was conducted at the house by Reverend Francis Parkman,* pastor of the New North Church, and burial was at Copp's Hill, the cemetery where so many of the Frackers and Dometts found their last resting place.

*Father of the noted American historian of the same name.

For five years after their marriage Molly's parents resided in Kneeland Street, a short distance from the Essex Street home of Wendell Phillips, and only a few blocks from Henry's store. There the first of their five children, Mary Dwight, was born on October 28, 1841. The others, in the order of their birth, were: Henry Bass, June 11, 1845; Maria Woodward [Molly], November 12, 1850; Harriet Fracker, October 8, 1852; and Helen Gordon, November 17, 1857.

In 1845, shortly before the birth of their second child, Henry and Mary moved to Roxbury, then a separate city, and in a house in Copeland Street, which her father had purchased in 1844, Molly was born. She was named for Maria Porter Woodward, Henry's favorite aunt.

As early as 1836, Henry began investing in real estate, and some fifty deeds are on file in the Registry of Norfolk County at Dedham, showing that at various times for the next twenty years he owned property and held mortgages in Roxbury, Brookline, Newton, and Needham. By the time of his removal to Roxbury he was rated as a fairly wealthy man, and he and Mary maintained two Irish servant girls as well as a coachman.

In 1843, his store having continued a steady growth, Henry erected a factory in Roxbury and began the manufacture of Brussels carpets, the first ever made in

the United States. He then formed a partnership with his brother-in-law, Joshua Lovejoy, under the firm name of Henry Pettes & Co., and opened a wholesale department in the rear of his store in Washington Street. The business was a success and soon the company was selling its product to retailers in all parts of the United States. In 1851 the firm name was changed to Pettes & Lovejoy and a retail store was opened at No. 6 Summer Street, near old Trinity Church.

For twelve years, in that pleasant horse-and-buggy age, Henry Pettes drove into the city and home again daily. He held a pew in the historic old First Meeting House (Unitarian) in Roxbury, and the family was active in church affairs. It was during these years that Henry became interested in the antislavery issue. Although never taking an active part, his purse was always open to the cause, and he frequently attended meetings addressed by William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Theodore Parker.

Early in 1857, his health having become impaired, Henry sold both the factory and the store, turned his half interest in the Pettes & Lovejoy firm over to his partner, and, with his family, moved to the milder climate of St. Louis.

The decision to move to the West caused many heart-aches in the breaking of old associations, especially for Mary, who dreaded leaving her brothers and sisters and



Melby at the Age of Three

going so far away. The journey was made in the primitive railroad coaches of the time, in which travelers were obliged to sit up day and night. During the trip they had little sleep, and the family was worn out at the journey's end.

A new home in the bustling, growing city on the Mississippi was soon established, and Henry cast about for some business in which to invest his capital. Despite the financial depression of that year, he formed a partnership with Samuel H. Leathe, and as Pettes & Leathe they opened an art store in North Fourth Street as dealers in "Pictures, picture frames, artists' material and plate glass."

With the outbreak of the Civil War, nearly all lines of business were paralyzed except trade in war supplies. Commerce between St. Louis and the South was shut off for four years, and for many merchants commercial ruin walked arm in arm with war. But Pettes & Leathe weathered the storm, and at the time of Molly's marriage to DeWitt their business was flourishing and the Pettes home in Locust Street was an appropriate setting for the wedding.

I I

May 16, 1871, was the wedding day, and at high noon, in the home of her parents, Maria Woodward Pettes and DeWitt Clinton Poole were married by Reverend William Greenleaf Eliot, minister of the Unitarian

Church of the Messiah. DeWitt was in uniform, and the young people of the Pettes family were greatly excited at having this 42-year-old army officer from the Indian country in their home, marrying their favorite sister. Molly wore a gown of white tulle that was covered with ruffles from top to bottom, and all who witnessed the ceremony said that she was the loveliest of beautiful young brides.

The event, in a way, was a reunion of New Englanders; for, like Molly and her parents and her brother and all but one of her sisters, Doctor Eliot and his wife were born in New England. Doctor Eliot was a native of New Bedford, was another of Doctor Channing's "boys," and was graduated from the Harvard Divinity School with the Class of 1834. Coming to St. Louis in that year, he had been ordained, and was now serving in the thirty-seventh year of his pastorate.

The Missouri Compromise of 1820 had made the state a battleground on the slavery issue, with St. Louis as a focal point for agitation. Doctor Eliot was an out-and-out abolitionist, and from his pulpit the voice of abolitionist New England had long opposed the "peculiar institution." But all through the years of agitation, even the proslavery adherents in the city had had a warm regard for the man. His compelling voice had not always been one of dissent, and his philanthropic activities had done much to win for him the love of all classes and

creeds. He had labored long to promote and advance the cause of education, and every worthy movement for social betterment could always count on him for support. A man of abounding vigor and tireless energy, he had given of himself to humanitarian service in times of pestilence and tragedy: during the devastating floods of 1844, and the dreadful years, beginning in 1848, when the ravages of cholera had killed a sixth of the city's population, and during the great fire of 1849 when a third of the city had been destroyed. By common consent, William Greenleaf Eliot was St. Louis's minister-at-large whose parish was the world and whose religion was to do good.

Eleazer Pettes had migrated to St. Louis in 1843, and it had been upon his advice that his brother Henry had followed him there fourteen years later, when his health began to suffer as the result of close application to his business in the severe climate of Boston. Eleazer and his wife had found a staunch friend in Doctor Eliot, and they had given his name to one of their sons. Molly's cousin, William Greenleaf Eliot Pettes, a lad of seventeen, was among the family group attending the wedding.

There were other associations that gave added interest to the ceremony. Henry and Eleazer had been members of a small band of border loyalists, led by Doctor Eliot and Roswell M. Field, which was credited with having helped Generals Francis P. Blair and Nathaniel Lyon to

save Missouri for the Union. Field was a New England-bred St. Louis lawyer whose hatred of slavery led him to undertake the defense of Dred Scott, the Negro slave, in one of the most celebrated legal battles of the nineteenth century. An even greater distinction was awaiting him, for he was the father of Eugene Field, who became the beloved humorist and poet. Recollections of vanished days were quickened as Doctor Eliot united one of Henry's daughters to a veteran of the Union armies. As DeWitt and his bride stood before the altar of ferns which Molly and her sisters had gathered and arranged, the venerable clergyman recalled that four years before, as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of The Mary Institute, "female department of Washington University," he had presented her with her diploma.

There was a pleasant hour during the reception which followed. As was natural, the conversation touched upon the stirring days of secession and war. DeWitt recalled when he first came into the state. That was when St. Louis was virtually a Union camp for the armies of the West, and he was leading his regiment through the frozen wastes of western Missouri and Kansas in the winter of 1861.

A name was mentioned that loomed large to DeWitt and to the country. It seemed only the other day—and St. Louisans remembered him well—that at the end of seven years of failure, a forty-year-old man, bedraggled

and defeated, walked the streets of St. Louis looking for a job, and pawned his watch the night before Christmas in 1858 to buy food and gifts for his wife and four children. DeWitt had heard of the incident, and now his father-in-law and Doctor Eliot were telling him the details. The "failure" was Ulysses S. Grant, whom the war had lifted from obscurity and poverty to chief command of the Union armies, and whom popular acclaim, after the hour of victory, had swept on a tidal wave of votes into the White House. If it seemed too fantastic for belief, it was nevertheless true, and was part of the saga of the West and of the war.

Late in the afternoon of their wedding day, Molly and DeWitt boarded a train for the East on a honeymoon trip that was made delightful by the many parties planned for them in New York by DeWitt's sister, Laura Poole Starin, and her daughter Harriet, who was a bride and just Molly's age. DeWitt was in a seventh heaven of bliss. What a change from his rude and lonely life on the plains to the glittering life of the metropolis and the company of these relatives, who were in a position to show the newlyweds from the West all the social and artistic charm of the East!

Chapter XVI

FRONTIER DAYS

I

ON that May morning in 1869 when DeWitt was preparing to leave Atlanta for the Indian country of Dakota, the newspapers of the land carried dispatches announcing completion of the first transcontinental line of railroad tracks. At Promontory Point, a few miles west of Ogden, Utah, the line of the Central Pacific had met the line of the Union Pacific, and a golden spike had been driven, uniting the tracks at the point where two groups of workers, the one from the West and the other from the East, had completed the job. The whole country, from President Grant down to the ragged little Negro boy selling newspapers in the streets of Atlanta, was celebrating the event. In Chicago there was a parade; in New York City the chimes of Trinity Church rang out "Old Hundred" and the national anthem; in San Francisco the entire city declared a holiday, ceremonies and banquets marking the event.

In that same year a firm of Eastern bankers undertook to raise the necessary capital to build another transcontinental line, from Lake Superior to the Pacific North-

west. Bonds were sold at home and abroad, and by 1871 the Northern Pacific Railroad Company was ready to start its surveys across the prairies of Dakota and up the valley of the Yellowstone River. Officials of the road were promised sufficient military protection for the surveying parties against any attacks by the Sioux.

2

DeWitt and his bride had returned to Fort Randall, Dakota, after their honeymoon in New York, and there they made their first home in a three-room cabin, built of cottonwood logs, as were the other structures of the old frontier post. With whitewash they freshened up the walls; with cotton print sent up from St. Louis, Molly made curtains for the rectangular holes called windows; and with a song in their hearts they both threw themselves happily into the life of the army post. The following fragment from a letter written by a friend who knew Molly well in those early days gives a glimpse of her: "I can only tell you how fascinating she was—a beautiful girl with a fine mind and lovely personality. She was a great favorite during her school days at the Mary Institute in St. Louis, and her father adored her. She was his comfort and his joy, and oh! how bitterly he missed her when she left with her husband for the Far West! You can fancy how all feared for her safety."

They had only a month together in their first home,

and then came separation. In July a party of surveyors and engineers of the Northern Pacific was ready to make a preliminary survey of the route which the railroad was to take from a point on the upper Missouri to the Yellowstone River in Montana. A military escort was ordered into the field as part of the Yellowstone River Expedition, to guard the surveyors through what was known to be hostile Indian territory, and four companies from Fort Randall were to go on short notice. DeWitt's company was one of the four selected for this special duty that would keep them far from the garrison for several months.

The young couple decided that it would be best for Molly to return to her parents' home in St. Louis; and as there was no regular stop at Fort Randall for boats going down river, the post commander ordered that a round shot from one of the garrison cannons be fired across the bow of the first steamer that passed. This was done; the steamer "Josephine" lay to, and the disconsolate and rather timid Molly was put aboard for the long, lonely trip down the Missouri.

The expedition was in the field for nearly four months, during which time it marched some five hundred miles in the round trip from Fort Rice (near the present city of Bismarck) to the Yellowstone and on up the valley of that river for about a hundred miles. Many hostile Indians were encountered, and the return march is de-

scribed as a series of harassing attacks by the red men and of frequent skirmishes with them.

While following a wounded antelope one morning, a popular young lieutenant named Crosby became separated from the party. No Indians had been seen that day, and all felt secure, so near were they to their home garrison; but soon a group of Sioux appeared in full view on a neighboring hill. One of them held up an object which he displayed with derisive shouts and taunting gestures. With the aid of field glasses the officers saw it was a scalp—probably that of the unfortunate lieutenant. A mounted patrol was sent out, but before it could reach the hill the Indians had disappeared. A search was made, and the mutilated body of Lieutenant Crosby was found and taken to the post for burial.

3

It was late October and snow was falling when the returning expedition reached the Missouri and went into camp some miles upstream from Fort Rice. There the four companies waited impatiently for final orders to return to their respective garrisons, and for the necessary river transportation. A group of officials of the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, who had come up from St. Paul, visited the officers in their camp one afternoon, and at an informal gathering outside the headquarters tents of General Joseph Whistler thanked the

army men for their summer's work. In a florid speech the president of the road dilated on the great enterprise, saying that at the very point where they were standing the line of the railroad would cross the Missouri, and that a city would be located on its east bank.

The Franco-Prussian War ended in May of this year. In August of the preceding year the German hosts had overwhelmed the French army on the field of Sedan, and in January, 1871, the great Bismarck had proclaimed King William I of Prussia as emperor of the German empire. Inasmuch as a large part of the capital to build the Northern Pacific had been raised in Germany, the company decided to name its new city in honor of the "Iron Chancellor." The president held a map of the proposed city in his hand, and in closing his speech made the generous gesture of offering lots in Bismarck to these hard-bitten army officers, as a gift from his company.

DeWitt, in after years, said that he and his friends shook their heads as they looked across the bleak mud flats, the dark, winding stream, and the cold, desolate prairie beyond. A registration fee of five dollars would be charged for each lot, and a good five-dollar bill in pocket seemed to them preferable to any number of downtown lots in Bismarck, Dakota.

As soon as he was back at Fort Randall, DeWitt sent for Molly, and they established themselves again in their little log-house quarters, enjoying the company of the

other officers and their wives, and entering into the many social activities of the garrison. "She learned to ride and could take long trips with her husband," a member of her family wrote. "She started a school for the garrison children and taught in the Sabbath School as well. There were Christmas trees and plays for the youngsters; she was ever doing something for others, and her letters home always told of her great love for her husband."

These letters, full of descriptions of life on the frontier and of the Indians, were eagerly received in St. Louis. Her father gave several to his friend William McKee, who printed them in his newspaper, the *Missouri Democrat*. One of the letters describes an Indian dance, and another tells of the visit to Fort Randall of a large buffalo-hunting party which had been organized for the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia.

Molly told how the hunting party rode into the garrison, headed by the Grand Duke and his guide, the one just as stunning looking as the other—Alexis clad in furs, and the tall, handsome young man beside him dressed from head to foot in fringed and immaculately clean buckskin. In the red silk kerchief that hung loosely about the latter's neck, under his long curly hair, flashed a great solitaire diamond pin, a present from the Grand Duke to his friend and guide, William F. Cody, afterward known to fame as Buffalo Bill.

Describing an Indian dance which took place at Fort Randall, Molly wrote:

This morning we were surprised by the sound of an Indian drum. As this betokened a dance, we hurried toward the sutler's store, which seemed to be near the center of commotion. There we saw the most absurd sight you can imagine. One of the Yankton Sioux had killed and scalped a Pawnee, and his squaw and her companions had come to Fort Randall to celebrate the event, hoping at the same time to get something to eat. There were in all about fifty Indians, in full paint and feathers. About thirty squaws were dancing in a circle. In the center stood six Indians holding between them the drum, which was an old barrel-head covered with hide. On this they were pounding with painted sticks and at the same time singing in the most unearthly manner.

The squaws were formed in about a three-quarters circle, the oldest and most important at one end, and then down to those eight or ten years old at the other. The latter are by nature the homeliest little beings you ever saw, and made hideous by the streaks of red and black paint that adorned their faces.

The dancing consists of a slight motion of the body and knees, which raises the heels from the ground but not the toes, accompanied by a slight movement to one side, which keeps the circle slowly moving round and round, the dancers howling and yelling in the most fearful manner and gesticulating violently. One old squaw used a cavalry saber in aid of gestures, but most of them had a tin mustard box filled with shot or pebbles, through which they thrust a stick ornamented with ribbon and porcupine quills. This formed a rattle which they shook about in all directions, emphasizing the songs by throwing the rattle over their heads.

Now and then there would be a pause, when the squaw whose husband had taken the scalp would chant his valorous deeds in a dreadful monotone. After a while the sutler sent out to them a box of chewing gum and a few turkeys of doubtful flavor. The turkeys were placed in the center of the circle and the gum divided by an old Indian with a piece of blue and white gingham over his head and a turkey's tail sticking out of that. He gave a small piece of gum to each of the squaws, and a handful to himself and each of the drummers.

During the ceremony an old decrepit Indian chanted a request that he be given some too, but the rest took no notice of him. . . . While the dance was going on, some of the hostile Indians came over the river and walked about with their blankets drawn over all but their eyes, which peered forth with a very evil expression. . . . The dancing continued three hours and was altogether the most ridiculous affair I ever saw. Words will not give you an idea of the combined effect of the chanting and singing, with the costumes and paint.

One can imagine the impression made on Molly's mind by this strange scene, and by the antics and the endurance of the Indians, whose rhythmic dancing lasted for three hours; while those lurking hostiles probably conjured up for her the tales of horror which were commonplace at every frontier army post.

In December of that year Napoleon Van Slyke, by then one of Madison's leading bankers, wrote to his aunt, Mary Mears Martineau, in Milwaukee:

Your very kind and good letter is received by tonight's mail and before I leave my desk, after a hard day's work, I will answer it.

By the same mail, I have letters from Uncle James, now enjoying a visit in Charleston, S.C., from DeWitt Poole and from Nancy, Uncle James Van Slyke's daughter in Syracuse.

DeWitt is busy tending baby, his daughter Helen Louise being now about seven weeks old. Born November 13th at Fort Randall, Dakota—a "child of the regiment," I suppose. He says Molly and the baby are well, but his bachelor pet dog's nose is out of joint entirely.

4

In the early months of the following spring, orders came from headquarters of the Department of Dakota for General David S. Stanley to take the field with a large force of infantry and cavalry, to give safe conduct and protection to another group of Northern Pacific surveyors and engineers. The survey was now to be completed, and the field work, preliminary to actual construction, was to be done along the line selected by the survey of 1871.

The infantry companies came from different regiments of the old Regular Army, and the cavalry was the now famous Seventh, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer, one of the "boy generals" of the Civil War, who had just come into the Sioux country. The expedition was to make an early start and was expected to be in the field until autumn. Five companies of the Twenty-second Infantry, including

DeWitt's Company H, were to go from Fort Randall.

St. Louis, although seven hundred miles away, again seemed the best place for Molly and the baby, but no boats were coming down the Missouri at that early season of the year. To reach the railroad, it was necessary to drive from Fort Randall to Yankton in an army spring wagon drawn by a four-mule team. The vehicle was of the type known in frontier days as a Daugherty wagon and was designed to carry, with reasonable comfort, as many as six passengers. The distance to be covered was seventy-five miles, and one small tavern at about the half-way point offered the only shelter.

The morning of that early spring day in 1873 was crisp and clear as the wagon rattled through the south gate of Fort Randall and out on the prairie, with a civilian teamster handling the four lines, and Molly, with the baby in her arms, sitting beside DeWitt on the hard, leather rear seat. By noon the wind had shifted to the north, the temperature had dropped, and a fine sleet was blowing at their backs. In the early afternoon it had become colder, and it was apparent that a Dakota blizzard would overtake them. Soon the air was filled with fine snow and particles of sharp, cutting ice, driven and whirled by a gale with such blinding force that it became impossible to distinguish familiar landmarks even a few feet distant along the wagon trail. By late afternoon the mercury had fallen sharply to several degrees below

zero, and the water in the sloughs and along the edges of the creeks was rapidly freezing.

The Indians had learned to remain in their lodges during such storms, or, if traveling, to move with their families and ponies into some sheltered ravine, there to wait until the blizzard had blown itself out. But no such shelter was available now, and Molly opened the front of her coat, unbuttoned the waist of her dress, and tucked the baby in against her warm body, while DeWitt held a buffalo robe around them, and the driver fought to keep the mules to the trail. At one point it seemed as though they could go no farther. A water-course blocked the way. It was frozen at the banks and was filled with floating, broken ice where the rapid current kept the center of the creek open. The driver swung his team down the steep bank, but the leaders would not breast the icy stream, and turned sharply to one side, bringing the wagon to a sudden, lurching stop which all but threw its occupants out, into the icy mud of the bank. DeWitt got out to examine the crossing, and he and the swearing, whip-cracking teamster finally managed to make the mules ford the stream. Much time had been lost, darkness had now come on, and in the blinding snow the driver soon lost the trail altogether. In trying to turn back to it, he found his own wheel tracks and realized that he was driving in a circle.

In the darkness they had the good fortune to strike a

fence which led them to a log cabin. The Half-Way House, DeWitt was told by a man answering the knock on his door, was only a few miles farther on, but the wary rancher refused to act as guide, saying that he couldn't possibly leave his wife and children alone on such a night. However, when he saw a ten-dollar bill, which DeWitt proffered, he changed his mind, and it was not long before the exhausted mules were pulled up at the Half-Way House, and the benumbed passengers were wading through the snow to the log step of the tavern door.

Poor Molly was in terror. Not for herself and DeWitt, for she knew they were safe, now that a haven had been reached. She was thinking of the little one. The bundle at her breast was so still that she feared to undo the wrappings until she had moved close to the fire which the landlord had made in the cold room. Helen Louise, oblivious to the danger she had been through, had been sleeping soundly; and when she opened her eyes and smiled, all fears were forgotten by the anxious mother.

A hot whiskey toddy, which DeWitt insisted that Molly take, was brought by their host. Molly bravely drank the potent draft, which contained much more liquor than water; and soon, as through a mist, she saw herself being put to bed by the motherly wife of the innkeeper, and, as in a dream, heard herself asking

vaguely why it was that her feet would not respond when she tried to walk, and why those silly, long-eared mules had not wanted to cross the creek.

5

Stanley's expedition took approximately the same route as that followed by the expedition of 1871, but began ascending the valley of the Yellowstone at a point much farther away. This time the command passed the mouth of a small stream known as the Little Big Horn, on the upper reaches of which Custer and most of his Seventh Cavalry were to be annihilated by Sitting Bull and his warriors on a sweltering day in June, 1876. The Indians did not attack the well-equipped column. Except for the long, hard marches, the heat and dust and grasshoppers, and some incidental skirmishes with the red men, in which a few lives were lost, the assignment was in many respects a rather pleasant excursion. Glimpses of their experiences are recorded in letters written in the field by General Stanley himself:*

Camp on the Yellowstone,
August 15, 1873.

Our march to this place was made in 21 days on only three of which we rested in camp. These eighteen days of marching have been as hard days as I ever put in as a soldier. The weather has been very hot, at least five days of 100 in the shade. The

**Personal Recollections of General David S. Stanley*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1917.

Yellowstone itself I think must be the most beautiful river in the world, but the country adjoining is repulsive in its rugged barrenness. The river is swift, deep, clear, studded with numerous islands, the banks lined with heavy groves of cottonwoods and having many valleys covered with rich grass. Buffalo plenty and we have caught many fine fish.

August 16, 1873.

We camped one night at the mouth of Powder River. Next morning we found the Indians had prowled about camp, which they continued to do each succeeding night until the 4th of August. Custer, who by the way has behaved very well, went ahead to look up road and select best camps. On the 4th he, with one squadron of 85 men, were resting in a grove well ahead of the main command, when Indians showed themselves. He followed but avoided the timber they had run into. Immediately three hundred Indians charged out. Custer dismounted his men and fought on foot for about an hour when, finding the Indians would do nothing, he mounted his men and charged, driving them like sheep. . . . Lieutenant Braden had his thigh bone broken by a bullet, one man, Tucker, Custer's orderly, was killed and three men wounded. Ketchum had his horse killed under him, shot in the head.

August 19, 1873.

We marched hard today and at nine o'clock tonight Reynolds, our courier, starts alone for Fort Benton with dispatches. It is all the way through Indian country and a trip of great peril.

We should be back at the stockade on the Yellowstone by the 15th of September and if the steamboat meets us, I will be at home shortly after the 1st of October. I have some very hard road yet before me, but tomorrow morning we set our faces East and that cheers us.

Other adventures were still in store for Stanley's men on the return march. On a warm day, when no Indians had been seen, the veterinary surgeon and Custer's trader, a Frenchman named Ballerau, straggled from the main column and were killed. They had been drinking at a small spring in a coulee and were searching among the pebbles for curios when seven hostile Sioux came down the opposite bank of the creek, riding their ponies. The careless white men did not see them until the leading Indian was fitting an arrow to his bow—and then it was too late. They ran for their horses but Ballerau failed to reach his before an arrow pierced his heart, killing him instantly. The veterinarian managed to mount his horse but it was no match for the fleet Indian ponies and he, too, was killed. General Stanley said of the incident: "The trader and the horse doctor had no arms. The trader leaves a young wife and baby at Memphis. He was one of the men who gave me much trouble by disobeying orders and bringing liquor, but I forgive him now and am sorry for his untimely fate."

The railroad survey having been carried to completion, the troops returned to their garrisons dotted along the Missouri, and the wild and dangerous territory of the Yellowstone was left to the embittered and thoroughly aroused Indians. Little did some of the men who rode homeward with DeWitt that fall dream of the dreadful fate that awaited them.

For yet a little while life would take the even tenor of its way at Fort Randall. As he trudged across the stifling wastes of Dakota in September, DeWitt had been thinking of Molly and the baby, and soon after their reunion at Fort Randall he wrote his father-in-law in St. Louis:

Molly and I have been quite busy fixing up our quarters: scrubbing, painting, whitewashing and bringing our scattered effects under one roof, preparatory to a home on the frontier.

Though somewhat removed from the busy haunts of civilization, Molly and I quite enjoy being back on our old stamping ground again.

6

Daily routine at the frontier post, relieved of its monotony by soirées among the officers' families, continued until the following autumn, and then came a sudden and unexpected move. The Twenty-second Infantry was ordered to stations in the Central Department, then commanded by General Winfield Scott Hancock, with headquarters at Chicago. The battalion to which DeWitt belonged was designated to garrison Fort Wayne at Detroit. He and Molly had hardly had time to settle down in a house with conveniences such as were unknown in the log cabins of the Far West, when two companies of the Twenty-second, one of them DeWitt's Company H, were ordered to New Orleans for temporary riot duty.

The year had been one of serious civil disturbances

and commotions throughout the South as the result of attempts to suppress the lawless activities of the so-called White League, a body of Southern men banded together for the avowed purpose of breaking up the "carpetbag governments" which had come into power at the close of the Civil War.

As far back as 1870, Congress had passed an act giving the President authority to protect the Negroes in their newly acquired rights as freedmen, and to punish perpetrators of violent deeds, whether against blacks or whites. Other similar measures to safeguard civil liberties were passed later, and all of them together became known as the Enforcement Acts. Rigid execution of these laws caused a temporary disbandment of the Ku-Klux Klan after several of its leaders had been arrested, tried, and convicted. The wanton cruelties proved at these trials caused a wave of revulsion against the Klan even among the former Confederates, and for a time its secret political crimes died down. But all Federal government offices in the South had been filled with Republicans, some of them honest and conscientious, others scheming and unscrupulous.

By 1874 the Democrats, who classified themselves as conservatives, had gained control of all the state governments in the old Confederacy, except those of South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana. The dispossessed Republican carpetbaggers, as well as those among them

whose authority was threatened, appealed to President Grant for military aid to help them maintain their positions, but in each case Grant refused assistance, except when outbreaks reached such a state that the public safety was endangered. The Democrats demanded home rule, while the Negroes complained that they were being intimidated, assaulted, disfranchised, and murdered for not bowing to the dictates of the White League. A situation of the gravest character developed, and in the struggle for supremacy between the Democrats and the Republicans, most of the latter being Negroes, there was danger that a race war would be precipitated.

The situation became so critical as the result of lynchings, shootings, and rioting that General Phil Sheridan was sent to New Orleans. With him went a strong force of Federal troops, among them DeWitt's company of the Twenty-second Infantry; while several ships of the United States Navy, which had been sent to co-operate, came up the river to lie at anchor off the city. Louisiana, all through that winter of 1874-75, was a tinderbox of political emotions that needed only a spark from the clash of racial hatred to start a conflagration. While General Sheridan was investigating complaints, the Federal troops and bluejackets were ready for any emergency.

The presence of these Northern forces in Dixie, so soon after the Civil War, was resented, especially by a

large class that still remembered with bitterness the hanging of Mumford for hauling down the Stars and Stripes from a pole atop the United States Mint and desecrating it. These "unreconstructed rebels" were remembering with hatred the man who had issued the hanging order, General Ben Butler. They were remembering also his celebrated General Order No. 28, directing "that hereafter when any female shall, by word, gesture, or movement, insult or show contempt for any officer or soldier of the United States, she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation."

The cultured people of New Orleans were weary of the political bickerings that had been going on for the better part of a decade; and, although they were firm in their conviction that the city and the state should be governed by the majority, they deplored conditions that led to violent reprisals and murder. To this latter circle General Sheridan and his officers were as welcome as they were distasteful to the others, and there are family memories of stories told later by Molly and DeWitt of the lively winter they spent in the Southern metropolis.

A round of parties, especially among the army and navy set, went on as usual, and there were a few Southern homes in which the Northerners were delightfully entertained. Louisiana, it must be remembered, had seceded from the Union by only a narrow margin of

votes; and while it bore its full share of deprivation, of suffering, and of death during the War between the States, it was not disposed on the whole to harbor resentment. In this respect, the cooler heads believed with the Confederacy's gallant Lee that the old animosities should be forgotten. DeWitt and his army friends were of the same mind, and while in New Orleans they formed friendships with many Confederate veterans, and exchanged experiences of the great war in which they were on opposing sides. Indeed, with a fine sense of humor, they all agreed that it was doubtful which side was the more frightened in the first battle of Bull Run.

To Molly, who had played a woman's part in the rough life of the Indian country, *Nouvelle-Orleans* was gay and enchanting. An aura of Old World mystery hung over this "Paris of America" in that winter of 1874. It was a city of caprice and legend, of gallantry and sportsmanship, of fun loving and romance, of sentiment and nostalgia, of tragedy mixed with glitter and carnival color. Soon they would be going back to Detroit and to the ordered routine of the army post, for such an interlude as this could not last forever. They would enjoy its exotic charm while there was yet time.

As DeWitt and Molly strolled of a late afternoon on the Rue des Bons Enfants, the Rue d'Amour, Elysian Fields Street, and along the other thoroughfares with their little shops and cafés that were bidding passers-by

to enter, they wondered if New Orleans had greatly changed since swashbuckling filibusterers, buccaneers, and pirates walked its cobbled streets. It was not so many years ago that Jean Lafitte, dangerous man that he was, came over from his pirate's lair on Barataria and helped Andrew Jackson. DeWitt thought of his Aunt Eliza Martineau's visit with the hero at The Hermitage. That was fifty years ago, but, after all, not so long, as time is reckoned. Only a scant sixty years had vanished since "Old Hickory" made his stand here and whipped the British.

After the hard life on the frontier, it was a great lark for DeWitt and Molly, with little Louie, to find a quiet nook in some side-street café for a Sunday supper such as only the French chefs of *la Louisiane* knew how to confect. But, with all its Old World color and dramatic interest, New Orleans is an American city; and, as the Northern officers and their ladies enjoyed this unexpected interlude, they almost forgot the turbulence that had brought them there.



Molly and Helen Louise
From a photograph taken in St. Louis in 1877

Chapter XVII

THE SIOUX WAR

I

FOLLOWING his interesting experience among the Indians at Whetstone Agency, DeWitt wrote a memoir of his life among the Sioux, in which he gave his opinion of their character and appraised some of the qualities of the Indians he knew so well. He made not only a just appraisal but also something of a prophecy when he said: *

In the eighteen months of my intercourse with them, I have seen many things to make my association far from disagreeable. Their simple form of government, their picturesque dress and habitations, their patriarchal surroundings, their hospitality, the bravery and endurance of the men, and the virtue and faithfulness of the women, are to be admired.

I have seen them in their villages, removed from disturbing influences, living in quiet and peaceful contentment. They are easily persuaded and governed. But a disturbing element, as old as the discovery of the continent, is at hand. The white man, a representative of a superior race, armed with greater knowledge has created discontent and brought confusion into their councils, and makes the administration of Indian affairs an unsatisfactory work from which I am glad to escape.

The superior race, moved by an uncontrolled and restless

*Among the Sioux of Dakota, by Captain D. C. Poole.

spirit of enterprise, . . . ever encroaches ruthlessly upon the domains of the Indians, in spite of treaties and promised protection. Policies are inaugurated and pursued according to the dictates of the ruling sentiment of the hour. The philanthropist with Utopian ideas would have the Indian secluded from contact with the pioneer who is engaged in planting the seeds of future civilization near the Indians' possessions, and the pioneer, finding the latter a troublesome neighbor cumbering the ground, would have him exterminated; while the spirit of fair play dominant in the Anglo-Saxon race, suggests means to ameliorate the asperities of the inevitable conflict, thus various views are advocated, and the results of wide discussion are crystallized into laws, the application of which makes the actual plan followed in dealing with the Indians. . . .

The Sioux are still no contemptible power, and when further encroachments shall compel them to act they have the means to save their customs and mode of life from the inexorable fate which will overtake the weaker tribes. The strong and active are not likely to surrender their cherished habits without a struggle.

It is worth noting that during his year and a half at Whetstone, DeWitt had no serious trouble with his charges, and that from the day of his arrival at the agency to the day of his departure he was held in awe by every unconscionable white man who sought to exploit and cheat the Indians. Now and then there had been bickerings between the Indians themselves, caused by some real or fancied grievance, and occasionally, as in the case of Big Mouth, one of their number had been killed; but so far as administrative affairs at the agency were

concerned, neither Spotted Tail nor any of the other chiefs registered a single complaint with the Indian Bureau. In fact, to his credit it is recorded that two years after DeWitt's return to duty with his regiment, Spotted Tail transmitted a request to Washington asking for a return of the agent "who let nothing stick to his hands."

Touching on the duties of the Indian agent, DeWitt said in his memoir:

Beyond the boundaries of civilization, isolated from the associations and comforts of a home, pestered and tormented by some of the worst specimens of white humanity, seeing the credulity of the Indians imposed upon and the good effects of honorable dealing neutralized, often traduced and vilified by men whom he may have thwarted in some nefarious scheme, made to share the consequences of deficiency in supplies over which he never had control, and made responsible by the public for any outbreak among the untamed and tantalized savages under his charge, his lines are not cast in pleasant places.

It has come to be believed that association with the Indian leads to dishonesty. On the contrary, I believe the tendency is the other way; the simple confidence which the Indian places in his Agent makes the latter his protector, and, unless a very depraved character, he will naturally guard the Indian and his rights.

2

The New Orleans interlude came abruptly to a close in the late spring of 1875, when the companies of the Twenty-second Infantry were ordered home to Fort Wayne at Detroit. Despite the rumblings of threatened

violence that greeted them when they detrained in the Southern city, no untoward incident had occurred. Another presidential campaign was in the offing, and though the conventions were a year away, James G. Blaine was being boomed for the Republican nomination and Samuel J. Tilden was being mentioned as the most likely candidate of the Democrats. There was much lively speculation at Fort Wayne all that fall and winter as to the probable outcome, especially among the officers who had been in New Orleans and had seen there the turmoil engendered by the national election of 1872. Though Horace Greeley, long the dynamic editor of the *New York Tribune*, who had unsuccessfully opposed Grant for a second term, was in his grave, the *Tribune* was as full of political news as ever, and DeWitt diligently read its dispatches from the South, which showed that violence was still rampant in Louisiana.

Though, as an army officer, he could take no part in politics, DeWitt was always a close student of political affairs. Lincoln's policy of reconciliation had appealed to him as the only just policy. He felt strongly that "rebel baiting" as a persistent practice of a powerful group in the majority party was as shortsighted as it was unworthy of the Northern leaders. He would not in the least degree alter the convictions which led him to become one of that gallant band of 75,000 volunteers who responded to Lincoln's call in '61; but he had

known the horror of the battlefield, and having lived to witness victory for the Northern cause, he, for one, did not purpose to continue fighting the Civil War to the end of his days.

With increasing vigor the "bloody shirt" was being waved by the Republican "radicals," and the continued fanning of sectional animosities was to result, early in 1876, in the narrow defeat of a proposed amnesty bill repatriating all Southerners. Yet there was a heartening ray of sunshine in the clouds of distrust. Sensible men and women in the North were won over by the generous eulogy of Charles Sumner, made in 1874 by Lucius Q. C. Lamar, scholarly senator from Mississippi. He had said, "My countrymen, know one another and you will love one another." Coming as it did from the man who had drafted Mississippi's ordinance of secession and had risen to a colonelcy in the Confederate army, Lamar's championing of sectional reconciliation struck a responsive chord in DeWitt.

Delegates to the Republican and Democratic national conventions, in the summer of that memorable centennial year, had hardly had time to reach their homes when the country was shocked by the news that General George A. Custer and a large part of his Seventh Cavalry had been annihilated by the Sioux Indians in a battle on the Little Big Horn River.

As he read the news of the massacre DeWitt was not

astonished. Only a few years before, he had written prophetically: "The Sioux are still no contemptible power, . . . The strong and active are not likely to surrender their cherished habits without a struggle."

In his diary of that summer of 1876 are the following terse entries: "July 8. Received telegraphic orders from Division Commander, General Hancock, to be in readiness to move for Fort Lincoln, Dakota, at a moment's notice." "July 10. Marched out of Fort Wayne, Michigan, at 6½ A.M. and to Grand Trunk Depot. Left for Montana to reinforce command of General Terry after Custer Massacre of June 22, 1876." Two days later he wrote: "Breakfasted at Elroy this morning. Are being hurried through to Bismarck as fast as possible. Weather extremely hot. Nothing heard of Gen'ls Terry or Crook today. All military men seem to feel they need reinforcements." And on July 14: "Arrived at Bismarck at 5 o.c. morning. Transferred to ferry boat and landed at Fort Lincoln at 8 o.c. and went into camp. Steamer 'Carroll' waiting to take troops and supplies to the Big Horn via Yellowstone river."

3

During the preceding few years discontent among the Sioux had become so general that by 1875 more and more of the agency Indians were leaving their reservations and joining the hostiles in the country just east of

the Big Horn Mountains. That winter, the Indian Bureau in Washington ordered couriers sent out with word that this concentration must disband, and that the Indians must return to their agencies, or the situation would be turned over to the War Department.

Sitting Bull, the great chief and medicine man of the Sioux, was largely responsible for the successful concentration of this group of hostile Indians. They were mostly of the several tribes of the Sioux Nation, but there were among them a large force of Cheyennes under Crazy Horse, and some Blackfeet under the sullen Two Moons. Red Cloud and Spotted Tail do not seem to have been there, but the Sioux chiefs Swift Bear, Gall, and Rain-in-the-Face took prominent parts in the battle of the Little Big Horn. These three and many other chiefs are mentioned in different reports of the Custer fight, but the accounts vary as to the part played by each.

In bringing the Indian question to this crisis, there had been, above everything, the bitter enmity of Sitting Bull against all white men. He hated and distrusted the white man and all his ways, and did not care who knew it. He is quoted as once having said to General Miles: "No Indian that ever lived loved the white man—and no white man that ever lived loved the Indian; God Almighty made me an Indian, but he didn't make me an Agency Indian, and I don't intend to be one."

Sitting Bull had kept the fires of hate and enmity burn-

ing in the hostile camps ever since the signing of the Treaty of 1868, and now he was having his day in bringing about this concentration of some four thousand well-equipped warriors—probably the strongest force of red men ever brought under one co-ordinated command.

The War Department took over the problem early in 1876, and in the spring of that year three expeditions were ordered into the Indian country to carry out General Phil Sheridan's seemingly well-planned campaign against the Sioux. The whole campaign is most interesting, and many accounts of it exist, all telling how one column under General George Crook, moving north from Cheyenne, first encountered the Indians near Rosebud Creek, a tributary that flows into the Yellowstone from northern Wyoming. A serious engagement with a large group of Indians, led by Crazy Horse, took place, and Crook's command, although fighting gallantly against superior numbers, was so severely damaged that Crook was glad to be able to extricate his men and withdraw to his advance base on Goose Creek.

Another strong command, under General Alfred Terry, moved west from Fort Abraham Lincoln, Dakota, along the route followed by Stanley in 1873, to the Yellowstone and up that river to the mouth of Rosebud Creek, where it made contact with a third column of regulars under General John Gibbon, which had marched from Fort Ellis in western Montana.

It is history how the impetuous Custer, who commanded the cavalry of Terry's column, was sent with his "Gallant Seventh" to scout up the valley of the Rosebud from that stream's confluence with the Yellowstone, for the purpose of locating the main body of Indians; how the three strong commands under Crook, Terry, and Gibbon waited at well-chosen points to close in on the Indians when they were located; and how Custer, not realizing the size of the hostile force he had found, ordered an immediate attack—an attack gallant but suicidal—without even notifying his commanding general.

Sitting Bull had been unquestionably the ringleader among the Indians in opposing the authority of the United States, but it is quite certain that he was not in command of them at the battle of the Little Big Horn. The truth probably is that there was no real Indian generalship in the Custer fight. There was leadership of different groups, and there were overwhelming numbers and a wild thirst for blood. The men who rode in the van among the Indians were the warriors who had the fastest ponies, and all of the first part of the fight was a horse race, with the death of the white troopers as the goal and their scalps as the prize.

4

The so-called "Custer Massacre" was really a serious military defeat of the armed forces of the United States, and

prompt action was needed to retrieve ascendancy over the Indians. With DeWitt's command and other troops and supplies on board, the steamer "Carroll" pushed on up the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers until, on August first, she arrived at the mouth of Rosebud Creek. The troops were disembarked and went into camp at that point with the now united commands of Terry and Gibbon.

An immediate advance on the hostile Indians was ordered, and on August 8 DeWitt records in his diary: "Broke camp at 5 o.c. this morning and commenced march up Rosebud toward General Crook. Trail very rough through valley of creek, crossing stream many times. Made ten miles and went into camp about 3 P.M. Extremely hot day, much suffering on account of it and poor water." "Aug. 9. Reveille at 3 o.c. this morning. Command marched at 5 o.c. Slight rain and quite cold compared with yesterday. Thermometer yesterday 116 in shade and today down to 50. The change has been so sudden that nearly everyone complains of cold. Went into camp at 4 o.c. P.M. in an old Indian village. Scouts came in about noon reporting hostile Sioux in front of command. Scouts returned later. Say they could not get through to General Crook."

During the next six weeks the troops, with many skirmishes but no engagement, traversed the wild country after the dispersing Indians. Sitting Bull's large band had

struck once and had struck hard; and now it was melting away before the strong force under Terry's command. Some of the Indians returned in small groups to the reservations; other bands, having eluded the troops, crossed the Yellowstone and found haven in the wild country beyond the Canadian line; but a large number of hostiles, still on the warpath, remained in the country south of the Yellowstone River.

By mid-September the Sioux Indian Expedition was declared ended. Terry and most of his command returned by steamboat to their garrisons along the Missouri, leaving the Fifth Infantry and six companies of the Twenty-second Infantry, all commanded by General Nelson A. Miles, to occupy the Indian country during the approaching winter. DeWitt's company was one of those assigned to Miles's command, and in October DeWitt recorded in his diary:

Camp Glendive Creek, M.T. Gen'l Hazen, Col. 6th Infty arrived from Ft. Buford with small wagon train loaded with supplies for this camp. Lieutenant Sharp, lately assigned to my company, arrived at same time with 75 recruits for the 6 companies of 22 Infty. Rec'd letter from wife stating that she intended coming out here. Wrote her not to come, also telegraphed from Bismarck. Sent letter and telegram by courier to commanding officer, Ft. Lincoln, and asked him to forward letter and telegram. . . . Moved into log hut today and took off clothing for bed for first time in over two months.

Although both regiments constructed rough cotton-

wood-log cantonments for shelter against the intense cold that would soon grip the country, and although the huts were welcome when the men could use them, the demands of their energetic commander kept officers and men engaged in active operations all through the severest weather. General Miles wrote of these experiences: *

It was my purpose when I found I had been designated to remain in that country not to occupy it peaceably in conjunction with the large bodies of Indians that were then in the field, and which practically included the entire hostile force of the five Indian tribes, namely: the Uncpapas under Sitting Bull, the Oglalas under Crazy Horse, the Northern Cheyennes under Two Moons, and the Minneconjou and Sans Arcs under their trusted leaders. Judging from our experience of winter campaigning in the southwest, I was satisfied that the winter was the best time for subjugating these Indians. At that period it was regarded as utterly impossible for white men to live in that country and endure the extreme cold outside the protection of well-prepared shelter. But I was satisfied that if the Indians could live there the white men could also, if properly equipped with all the advantages we could give them, which were certainly superior to those obtainable by the Indians. I remarked to General Terry that if given proper supplies and a reasonable force, I would clear the Indians out of that country before spring.

The command was equipped, so far as possible, as if it were to undertake an Arctic expedition, and this was absolutely necessary, for at times during that winter all

**Personal Recollections of General Nelson A. Miles.* Chicago: The Werner Company, 1896.

the mercurial thermometers were frozen solid, and by the subsequent use of spirit thermometers temperatures between 55° and 60° below zero were recorded. Through that hard winter the campaign continued, and Miles and his troops demonstrated that they could move swiftly to any part of the country even in sub-zero weather, and hunt the enemy down in his camps wherever he might take refuge. There had been some severe fighting, especially with the Cheyennes and Oglalas, and some important captures had been made; and early in the new year the command, having accomplished what it set out to do, returned to the cantonment on the Yellowstone. The captured Indians were taken along, and, although kept under strong guard, were kindly treated and well fed and clothed.

Early in February, a brave and trusted white scout named John Brughier was sent with two of the captives to the hostile camps to offer terms of surrender. After a perilous trip, Brughier succeeded in locating the principal camp and entering it. He found the Indians camped in the deep snow and suffering greatly from the cold, while their ponies were dying of starvation and exposure. The following entries were made by DeWitt in his diary:

March 18. Cantonment, Tongue River, Montana. A number of Indians came in today for the purpose of surrendering. This party consists of Sioux and Cheyennes, 104 warriors, 59 women and children.

March 21. Invited to council with Indians today at 10 o.c. A.M. Gen'l Miles presented his views to Indians in regard to desire for peace. The Indians—thru the Chiefs, Two Moons—Sioux, and White Bull—Cheyenne, wanted to trade here for ammunition and get squaws held as prisoners. Not very satisfactory council.

March 22. Another council held today. Seven chiefs remain here, while others go out to camps to bring others or go to some Agency. Scout Brughier goes with them to report what conclusion they have come to. The Indians talked more about peace today than yesterday—Council considered satisfactory in the interest of peace. Mail arrived today—letters from wife, 14, 18 and 26 of February.

April 16. Interpreter Brughier returned with a few Indians last night. Reports 150 lodges coming. About twenty arrived this morning reporting a number of 5 or 600 on the way. 16 Head of beef cattle sent out to them, they being without food. Will arrive here within a day or two.

After the arrival of this large body of Indians, General Miles held another council, at which he heard their statements and considered their wishes in the matter of terms for a general surrender. Then he told them firmly but kindly of the desire of the Government to maintain peace in the region, saying that until this result was obtained the troops would be used relentlessly against them. Miles relates in these words the dramatic surrender that followed:

I informed them that it was my earnest wish to be their friend, rather than their enemy, but that I must continue to be their enemy until they placed themselves in subjection to the

Government. My intention was to impress upon them the power of the Government, and at the same time its purpose to treat them justly and humanely.

At the close of my remarks the entire body of Indians, more than a hundred in number, remained in absolute silence for several minutes, which reminded me of a statement I had read, written by Benjamin Franklin more than a hundred years before; and if this silence was a mark of civility it was the cause of the most painful anxiety on my part as the moments went slowly by. At last a stalwart Indian by the name of Little Chief rose. Throwing back his buffalo robe from his shoulders, and letting all the covering he had on down to his waist fall gracefully about his loins to his feet, he looked an ideal chief, standing over six feet in height, and being slender, sinewy and muscular. His features were prominent, sharp, and regular; his cheekbones were high, and his lips were thin and severe; and he looked, as we afterward learned that he was, an orator of the Northern Cheyennes. The scars of the sun-dance were very prominent on his upper arms and breast, and dignity and grace marked his every movement and gesture.

He commenced by proclaiming that he was a chief as his fathers had been before him for many generations; that they had lived in that country from time immemorial and regarded it as their own, and that they looked upon us as invaders. In the course of his remarks he gave the Indian side of the great question, proclaiming that they had been wronged, and that the whites were the aggressors. He finally came to the point in which I was most interested. He said:

"We are weak, compared with you and your forces; we are out of ammunition; we cannot make a rifle, a round of ammunition, or a knife; in fact, we are at the mercy of those who are taking possession of our country; your terms are harsh and cruel, but we are going to accept them and place ourselves at your mercy."

Of all the eloquent words I have ever listened to, these were the most delightful to me, and they sent a thrill of joy through my heart as I realized that our work had been accomplished, and our toils and sacrifices were at an end. Little Chief concluded by saying that some of their number would go down and surrender at the agencies where their relatives were, while others desired to surrender to the military and remain on the Yellowstone. . . .

In the meantime Sitting Bull had gathered his camp south of the Yellowstone and when Crazy Horse's following decided to place themselves under subjection of the Government, he, in order to avoid surrendering and to escape further pursuit, retreated to the northern boundary and sought refuge on Canadian soil. His following was then in a very destitute condition, almost entirely out of ammunition, having lost nearly everything except their guns and ponies. They remained on British territory for two years, when they finally all returned and surrendered.

There was one camp, however, with nearly sixty lodges, chiefly Minneconjou under Lane Deer, who declared that they would never surrender, and would roam where they pleased, and that they were going over to the Rosebud to hunt buffaloes, and they actually did start westward for that purpose. Lane Deer had been told through an interpreter that unless he surrendered the troops would come out after him and bring him in. He declared that he had good scouts and that no white man could get near his camp or capture his people.

5

Early in May, 1877, General Miles started south from the cantonment at the junction of the Tongue and Yel-

lowstone rivers, in search of the hostile camp of Lame Deer and his followers. His command, accompanied by a wagon train and pack mules, marched up the Tongue River, and, after covering some sixty miles, the scouts found the trail of Lame Deer's village, which had been made the month before, as the hostile chief moved his people west toward the Big Horn Mountains. From this point Miles moved his troops directly west, as much as possible under cover of darkness, until early one morning his scouts reported the distant smoke of the hostile camp. The approach entailed hard marching for the foot troops.

On May 5 DeWitt wrote in his diary: "Commenced march at 5:30 A.M. Crossed Tongue river twice before noon. At 11:30 A.M. halted for two hours. Crossed Tongue river thrice in afternoon and got into camp about 8 o.c. P.M. Fell in water. Clothes saturated. Warm day." Next day they "commenced march at 6 o.c. A.M. Crossed Tongue River four times during day. Arrived in camp at 2 o.c. P.M. Am in command of four companies. Major Dickey, with two companies, is in charge of forage train."

Although DeWitt continued to make short entries in his diary on each day of the Lame Deer Expedition, a more detailed report of the march and of the engagement with the Indians that followed it is given by General Miles:

Four troops of the Second Cavalry had been sent to report to me. With this command, and two companies of the Fifth Infantry and four* of the Twenty-second Infantry, I started up Tongue River on the 5th of May, and after a march of sixty-three miles from the Yellowstone I crossed the trail of Lame Deer's camp where he had moved west toward the Rosebud about the middle of April. Foreseeing that some of their men would be watching our command, we passed on as if apparently not seeking their camp, or noticing their trail. After a short march beyond the trail, the command went into camp apparently for the night, on the Tongue River. Then after dark, leaving our wagon-train with an escort of three infantry companies, we marched directly west under cover of the darkness with the remainder of the command, as straight across the country as it was possible to move a body of troops.

Although it rained during a part of the night, we marched as rapidly as was possible in a country of that broken character, a distance of some thirty miles to a high divide between the Rosebud and the Big Horn, known as a spur of the Wolf Mountains. Here I concealed the command in a pocket of the mountains—a term used for describing a short valley surrounded on all sides except the entrance, by high bluffs or ridges. As soon as daylight appeared a few soldiers and scouts were sent out to carefully reconnoitre the country. They found that the camp of Lame Deer had passed only a few days before. Both the white scouts and the Indians displayed great skill and caution in discovering the traces of the hostile camp and concealing their own movements, and from the top of the high peak they discovered the Indian village some fifteen miles away in an air line.

Here we had an exhibition of the sharpness of the eyes of

*According to the Diary of DeWitt Clinton Poole, there were six companies of the Twenty-second Infantry in the Lame Deer Expedition.

the Indians, accustomed to hunting game. When first seen the camp was not recognized by the white men, but the Indians declared that they could see the smoke over the village. To me it looked like mist or a white cloud against the side of the mountain until I examined it more carefully with a glass. The Indians also announced that they could see ponies grazing on the hills. This was discovered to be correct by their companions, but not without using the field glasses.

How to get to this camp was the next question. It was impossible to approach it during the daytime, so the command was concealed until night and then moved a short distance up one ravine and down another, all the time keeping under cover of the hills so as not to be discovered. In that way we approached a point within eight miles of the village, where we remained until one o'clock the next morning. Then we started again and moved slowly to the valley of the Rosebud, then up that valley for two or three miles, and at four o'clock, May 7, just at the dawn of day, we found ourselves in close proximity to the Indian village.

In striking contrast to former campaigns, at this time the prairies were covered with green grass, the trees were in full foliage, the air was filled with the odor of flowers, and the birds were singing. If we had been going to some peaceful festival, the scene could not have been more propitious.

The dismounted troops were unable to follow at the rapid pace that the mounted command found necessary in order to enable them to reach the immediate vicinity of the Indians just at dawn, or as near that time as possible. The camp was on a tributary of the Rosebud known to the white men as the Big Muddy, but called by the Indians "Fat Horse Creek." They had given it this name because in spring the grass there was so abundant and rich that their horses feeding upon it always grew strong and fat.

The mounted infantry and scouts under Lieutenants Casey and Jerome were ordered to charge directly up the valley and stampede the Indian horses, while the battalion of cavalry followed at a gallop and attacked the camp. This attack was gallantly made. The command under Lieutenants Casey and Jerome stampeded the entire herd of ponies, horses and mules, four hundred and fifty in number, and drove them five miles up the valley, where they rounded them up and by a long circuit brought them around to the rear of the command which was engaging the Indians.

During the engagement, Majors Dickey and Poole of the Twenty-second United States Infantry, came up with their command, having moved to the front at the sound of the guns in a forced march.

Before making the attack I had ordered our Sioux and Cheyenne Indians to call out to the Lamé Deer Indians that if they threw down their arms and surrendered we would spare their lives. I was anxious to capture some of them alive, as we hoped thereby to secure the surrender of all the Indians in the camp. As we galloped up to one group of warriors they apparently recognized the purport of the demand and dropped their arms upon the ground. In order to assure them of our goodwill, I called out "how-how-kola" (meaning friend) and extended my hand to the Chief, Lamé Deer, which he grasped, and in a few seconds more I would have secured him and the others, as, although he was wild and trembling with excitement, my adjutant, George W. Baird, was doing the same with the head warrior, Iron Star. Unfortunately just at that time one of our white scouts rode up and joined the group of officers and soldiers with me. He had more enthusiasm than discretion, and I presume desired to insure my safety, as he drew up his rifle and covered the Indian with it. Lamé Deer saw this and evidently thought the young scout was going to shoot him. I know of no

other motive for his subsequent act than the belief that he was to be killed whether he surrendered or not. As quick as thought, with one desperate, powerful effort, he wrenched his hand from mine, although I tried to hold it, and grasped his rifle from the ground, ran backward a few steps, raised his rifle to his eye and fired. Seeing his determined face, his set jaw, wild eye, and the open muzzle of his rifle, I realized my danger and instantly whirled my horse from him, and in this quick movement the horse slightly settled back upon his haunches; at that moment the rifle flashed within ten feet of me, the bullet whizzed past my breast, leaving me unharmd but unfortunately killing a brave soldier near my side. Iron Star broke away from Adjutant Baird at the same time. This instantly ended all efforts to secure their peaceful surrender and opened a hot fight that lasted but a few seconds. A dozen rifles and revolvers were opened on the scattered warriors who were fighting us, and all went down quickly beneath the accurate, close and deadly fire. The whole incident was over in much less time than it takes to describe it.

The fight with Lame Deer's band was the last action against the Sioux in which DeWitt took part.

Orders having come up the river relieving them from duty in the Indian country, the six companies of the Twenty-second Infantry returned to the cantonment on the Yellowstone, leaving the rest of General Miles's command in the field, to destroy the food reserves of the hostiles and to drive the scattered remnants of Lame Deer's band back to the agencies. When DeWitt turned to a fresh page in his diary, after hearing the good news, it was the happiest day he had known since leaving Fort

Wayne: "May 31. In camp. Rained during the night and all this day. Tongue river overflowed its banks. Learned that 22nd Infty was relieved from duty in this Department (Dakota). Great joy among officers."

When the Twenty-second reached Fort Lincoln an order was there directing DeWitt to proceed with his battalion by rail from Bismarck to Chicago, to help maintain public order and to stop riots of striking railroad employees who were holding all transportation in and out of the city in a death grip. A short but vivid account of the battalion's experience is taken from his diary for July, 1877:

Upon our arrival near Chicago we were informed that we could not leave the cars and that the mob had obstructed the track so that we could not enter the depot. The obstruction was soon disposed of. At the depot the companies were quickly in line, three hundred strong, bronzed with a year's exposure in the field, accustomed to marching without music or banners, with a step and swing good for 25 miles a day without a straggler. All the men in shirtsleeves, with trousers folded over at the bottom and stockings drawn over them in place of leggings. Each man with a prairie belt of his own make strapped on, handsomely showing forty rounds of ammunition.

We marched out of the depot onto the street filled with an angry-looking mob; an ugly member of the same threw a brickbat which just missed the head of a sergeant who saw the man, and, in his anger, forgetting his discipline, fired his gun, the bullet passing through the hat of the rioter and over the heads of his companions to strike the brick wall of a building nearby.

Upon this happening, the crowd of rioters immediately disappeared, and on the march from the N. W. Railway depot through the city to the freight house of the Burlington & Quincy Railroad, the mob of men and women seemed more than willing to give the battalion the right of way. Without fine clothes and with no guns bedecked with flowers our three hundred men had produced a moral effect that day upon large crowds of ugly rioters in Chicago that had not been attained by ten-fold more troops of local and State fame.

After another short tour of riot duty, at Wilkes-Barre, where strikers were demoralizing transportation, destroying property, and threatening public safety, the companies of the Twenty-second returned to regular garrison duty at Fort Wayne.

In August of the next summer, DeWitt made a trip to Fultonville in the old Mohawk Valley, to see his mother, who, now known as Grandmother Sherwin, was living in what was called "the farm house," in the beautiful grounds of Starin Place. Young Helen Louise, or "Louie" as she was called, went with her father, and, on this first visit to the East, had a never-to-be-forgotten time. Louie and her cousin Laura Belle Spraker had uncontrolled run of the "big house" occupied by Uncle John and Aunt Laura, and they romped at will in and out of Grandmother Sherwin's modest home.

There was a reason for Molly's remaining in Detroit that summer. Her sister Nellie had come to visit until early autumn, when she would take Louie back to St.

Louis for a visit with Grandfather and Grandmother Pettes.

From Fort Wayne, on Sunday morning, October 6, 1878, DeWitt wrote what was to him a very important letter, which he commenced with the customary formality of the times, addressing his father-in-law, Henry Pettes, with the salutation, "My dear Sir." He then continued in the following jocular style:

"Our little stranger arrived somewhat in advance of regular time-table. Nevertheless, he is as perfectly formed—robust, round-hinded little rascal—as you could wish to see. He commenced crying about 12:30 this morning.

" 'The child that is born on the Sabbath Day
Is blithe and bonny and good and gay'

"Molly desires me to tell her father and mother that she is as well and happy as can be. Also to tell Louie that her little brother, John Hudson, wants to see her very much."

If the equally formal "With kind remembrances to all, I am very truly yours, D. C. Poole" seemed to the elated Petteses a little too much in keeping with the army tradition of formality, the rejoicing in both households made up for it. And, back in the Mohawk Valley of New York State, when she heard the glad tidings that the child had been named for his grandfather and was to carry on a name that other generations of the Pooles



Harriet Mears Peole
("GRANDMOTHER SHERWIN," IN 1878)

had borne, the little old lady in the "farm house" at Starin Place looked back through the mists of memory to a day in 1817 when a boy from Oriskany came cantering over the hills to Rome.

That night she mailed a letter to Detroit, sending her love and blessing to her little grandson, and saying: "I am glad that Molly is willing to name the baby John Hudson Poole." Then, having sealed the letter, she sat in reverie by the lamplight as the joyous, vanished years returned in a flood of recollection.

Chapter XVIII

ARMY LIFE

I

IN the spring of 1879 the Twenty-second Infantry was ordered to move from stations on the Great Lakes to Texas, to garrison several old frontier army posts which were located in the central and western parts of the Lone Star State. The regiment was moved by troop trains to San Antonio, and from that point the several units marched to the posts they were to occupy.

Fort Clark was designated as the station for a large part of the regiment and as the headquarters of General David S. Stanley, who commanded it. Stanley had been an outstanding major general during the Civil War, and, although since the postwar reorganization he had held the rank of colonel in the Regular Army, he carried the honorary title of brevet major general, and was always called "General" Stanley.

DeWitt's company was separated from the main portion of the regiment and was ordered to garrison Fort McKavett, a small, long-since abandoned and forgotten army post, situated about one hundred and sixty miles northwest of San Antonio. Thither DeWitt went with his men, accompanied by Molly and the two children,

who followed the marching column in an army spring wagon driven at the head of the baggage train. They camped each night, and Molly's six-months-old baby spent most of each day rolled up and sound asleep in an army blanket, on the floor of the Daugherty wagon. After eight days in the open country they reached their destination, and DeWitt and Molly established their new frontier home in the "captain's quarters"—a little four-room adobe house.

Another change of station came for them in the fall of that year. In late November, DeWitt and his company marched south to Fort Clark, where he had been ordered to join the headquarters command of the regiment. For almost two years, at this larger and pleasanter station, DeWitt and Molly led a happy life. In addition to General Stanley and his family, there were Lieutenant Colonel Elwell S. Otis and his family, and many married couples whom the Pooles had known at Fort Wayne and Fort Randall, while several young officers, recently graduated from West Point, added to the social gaiety.

At this post there were no Indian troubles and no hardships of climate such as those they had faced in Dakota. The daily routine of garrison duty was not heavy. There was riding to greyhounds for coyotes and jack rabbits; wild turkey and quail were plentiful in the surrounding country; and the near-by Nueces River, with its tribu-

tary creeks, afforded excellent fishing. Those were the carefree and happy days of army frontier life that followed the hardships and dangers of the old frontier in the Sioux Indian country. Even the one-hundred-and-fifty-mile march from Fort McKavett to Fort Clark had been like a private hunting trip. To care for himself and his family, DeWitt had detailed an excellent soldier-cook, who, with only a Dutch oven and a roasting spit, prepared and served culinary wonders from the fish and wild game provided by his commanding officer. Baby Jack, however, is reported to have preferred Gail Borden's condensed milk, "Eagle Brand."

The two years at Fort Clark passed quickly, and it was with mixed feelings that DeWitt and Molly heard that the time had come for another move. The thought of new duties and a new home in the East was alluring, but their hearts were saddened by the belief that they would never again return to the old regiment, now that DeWitt was being detached from it, at a time when promotion might soon be coming to him. Although the new assignment was to pleasant duty in a city that held a strong attraction for them, it was with deep regret that DeWitt and Molly bade farewell to the Stanleys, to Colonel Otis's family, and to many more of the dear friends whom Molly had known since she was a bride.

On September 8, 1880, DeWitt entered in his diary: "Left Fort Clark, Texas, 7 A.M., en route to New York."

Wife, Louie, and Jack in the ambulance. Detailed on recruiting service. Arrived at Turkey Creek at 10 o.c. A.M., had fresh team of mules and went on to Uvalde. Arrived at 1 P.M., left at 1:30 and arrived at Sabinal at 6 o.c. P.M. Remained over night." The next day they "left Sabinal at 6 o.c. A.M. and arrived at Deems, at 9 o.c. Left lead-mule gone lame. Arrived at Castroville at 3 o.c. P.M., stopping at Taxdie's ranch."

These Texas ranch houses were welcome shelters, for there was no time for camping on this trip; but the accommodations that the ranchers offered were really inferior to those of a clean army tent, and the food could not compare with that which Molly and DeWitt had enjoyed around the campfires of their recent cross-country trips.

DeWitt wished to reach San Antonio and the railroad on the day they left Taxdie's, so the teamster was ordered to be ready to start at five o'clock the next morning. Molly and the children were up before daylight and were starting to dress by the dim light of a smoky kerosene lantern, when, suddenly, Molly's heart sank in dismay. She had picked up Jack and found that his face was a bright scarlet and so terribly swollen that one eye was completely closed. In the uncertain light his appearance shocked her. Molly was sure that her child was "coming down" with some dread disease. She called to the large and rather slatternly Mrs. Taxdie to hurry to

her aid with hot water, while from DeWitt's first-aid kit Molly prepared bandages and antiseptics. When Mrs. Taxdie arrived, she took one look at Jack and then set down her pan in disgust.

"There ain't nothin' wrong with that baby," she said; "just a bedbug has bit him on the eye."

2

Back in the summer of 1876, while DeWitt and his army companions were deep in the lands of the Sioux, remote from the whirl of politics and public affairs, the country was getting ready for the most exciting presidential campaign since the election of Abraham Lincoln. The Democrats had nominated Governor Samuel J. Tilden, of New York, and the Republicans had chosen a "dark horse," Governor Rutherford B. Hayes, of Ohio. DeWitt had hoped that the Republican standard-bearer would be James G. Blaine, whom he always greatly admired, but he doubted whether Blaine's nomination could be brought about, because his name had been linked with revelations of graft and corruption. Even if Blaine could have broken through the barriers of opposition within his own party and obtained the Republican nomination, which he so much coveted, it appeared to DeWitt, as to most disinterested observers, that 1876 would be a Democratic year.

Serious charges against the Republican administration

had been aired even before Grant's first term was completed, and his second term had been beset by additional revelations of graft in high places. The "salary grab" bill, described by its opponents as a "back-pay steal" by Congress, had met with public disfavor. Continuing racial strife in the South, due principally to carpetbag rule, had added to the woes of the soldier in the White House. The inner group of a corporation known as the *Crédit Mobilier*, which had been formed for the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad, had been charged with awarding themselves contracts at the Government's expense, and with bribing public officials. Blaine had been accused of accepting stock in this shady enterprise.

Beside his Western campfires DeWitt read the newspapers that were sent to him from St. Louis, New York, and Madison. Then, as now, opinion was divided as to Blaine's culpability. His unblemished record, until the *Crédit Mobilier* exposé, seemed to DeWitt to warrant reservation of judgment. Blaine's defense of his conduct, made in an impassioned address on the floor of the Senate, impressed DeWitt as a convincing disproof of wrongdoing. Yet as he read newspaper reports of the temper of the country, he believed—untrained though he was in the ways of political prognosticators—that a Democratic president would be elected.

Blaine, the one candidate believed to be indispensable to Republican victory, had failed to receive the nomina-

tion, despite the eloquence of Robert G. Ingersoll's nominating speech in which the Senator from Maine was likened to an "armed warrior" and a "plumed knight." The Plumed Knight had fallen, and Rutherford B. Hayes was to lead the hosts of Republicanism.

Hayes's colorless administration as governor of Ohio seemed no match for Tilden's brilliant years at Albany. The people of the North were weary of phantom heroes battling against "treason" and "rebellion." DeWitt himself was weary of them, too, and he believed that nothing could avert Republican disaster in November.

Confidential letters from John H. Starin, his brother-in-law, indicated as much, though John had not despaired of a Republican victory. Starin, himself, in that critical year for his party, was the Republican candidate for Congress in his home district in the Mohawk Valley. Though far from the scenes of political warfare, DeWitt was hoping with all his heart that John would be elected, both on account of their warm friendship and because he felt there was need for such a man in the councils of the nation.

John Starin was elected to Congress by a flattering majority, but the contest between Tilden and Hayes had to be settled by a special electoral commission which did not make its decision until almost the eve of inauguration. Hayes was finally awarded the disputed electoral vote and was sworn into office, but most Democrats and

many Republicans continued to charge that Tilden had been defrauded by corrupt returning boards. Both candidates, however, maintained an admirable silence while the decision was pending. If Hayes was seated at the expense of exact justice to Tilden, some good would come of the decision, for it was tentatively understood, John Starin hinted to DeWitt, that the carpetbaggers henceforth would receive no support from Washington, that Federal troops would be withdrawn from the South, and an end put to the abuses of Reconstruction.

Through the next four years DeWitt was more than ever interested in what went on in Washington. Starin was re-elected in 1878, and though he seldom made a speech, his work on committees was such as to render him a valued adviser on legislation affecting business and finance. During his years in the capital he and Laura maintained their home at No. 8 Lafayette Square, where they entertained with a fine hospitality. The house was a gathering place for many of the Washington newspapermen as well as for officials of the Administration and members of Congress. During the late seventies and early eighties, the Washington correspondent of the *New York Tribune* was Howard Carroll, a brilliant young journalist who had been educated in Europe, and who had become one of Whitelaw Reid's most trusted interpreters and reporters of political affairs. Carroll and Starin were close friends, and, during those days in

Washington, the young man courted and won John's younger daughter, Caroline.

In that fall of 1880, when DeWitt and Molly returned to the North from Texas, they were frequent guests of John and Laura in their New York town house at No. 9 West 38th Street. One evening, when the Starins were entertaining a large group of friends at dinner, Captain Poole was introduced to "Mr. Arthur of New York."

As they clasped hands, the tall, portly but handsome Arthur said: "Poole . . . Poole, aren't you the officer who brought those Indians from the West some years ago?"

It was the first time they had met since a day in the summer of 1870 when the rising young Republican leader helped to make DeWitt's stay in New York City, with his Indian charges, a pleasant break in the return journey from Washington to Whetstone Agency. Chester Alan Arthur did not know, until ten years after that almost forgotten incident, that his friend John H. Starin and the army captain from the West were related.

Arthur had already served for more than five years as Collector of the Port of New York, but had been removed by President Hayes as the result of Hayes's dislike of Roscoe Conkling, the powerful Republican "boss" of the Empire State. At the Cincinnati convention in 1876, Arthur had led the New York delegation

in sponsoring the candidacy of Conkling—a candidacy which collapsed before the convention proceedings were hardly under way. Less than four months after Hayes entered the White House, Conkling was battling to save his political machine from destruction. As one of Conkling's lieutenants, Arthur suffered his first political setback along with his chief.

Though the Conkling-Arthur machine had lost the Custom House, and with it the position of custodian of Federal patronage in New York State, Arthur was still a powerful political figure who would have to be reckoned with at the party's national convention in 1880. As the time for that convention approached, friends of both factions sought to patch up the quarrel. Grant's friends were booming him for a third term, and John Starin's house in Lafayette Square was a meeting place for the leaders of the movement in favor of the hero of Appomattox. Senator J. Donald Cameron, of Pennsylvania, was one of the leaders pledged to deliver his state's delegation to Grant; John A. Logan was pledged likewise in Illinois; while in New York, Conkling was doing his best to get a delegation that would be for the former President. Supporters of Grant, who were using the Southern issue as a reason for Grant's re-election, became known as "Stalwarts," while the forces favoring Blaine were called "Half-Breeds." DeWitt concluded that he was a "Half-Breed"—if sup-

port of Blaine made him one; for he did not believe that a third term was wise, and felt that if Grant succeeded in getting a third nomination he would be defeated.

The Grant men were sure that he was the only candidate who could save the party from defeat. Northern business feared that a depression would follow the election of a Democratic president; and John Starin, as a conservative business man, was a "Stalwart" who believed that what was good for business was good for the country. He had been in business in New York City too many years and had viewed the unscrupulous Tammany's machinations at too close range ever to want to see its methods foisted upon the nation through a Democratic victory at the polls; for, as he often expressed it, the national Democratic party was of a piece with the New York Tammany machine.

3

DeWitt and Molly arrived in New York City a few months after the Republican convention of 1880 had been held in Chicago. Grant's name had been presented by Conkling, and John Sherman's name placed in nomination by General James A. Garfield, of Ohio, whose spirit of conciliation attracted the attention of the delegates. Blaine was still a serious contender as the convention opened; but with a deadlock firmly established at the end of twenty-eight ballots, it was seen that Grant

could never obtain the seventy votes necessary for his nomination. On the thirty-sixth ballot the forces opposing him suddenly resolved to throw their united support to Garfield, and for the second time in succession the Republican party decided to ride into the November fray on a "dark horse."

Neither Arthur nor his many friends, who had often gathered at the Starin home, were prepared for the surprising nomination which followed. To consolidate their forces against the common enemy, the Republican party leaders selected Chester A. Arthur as the running mate of James A. Garfield.

John Starin and his political group were elated at the turn of events which had brought this honor to their close friend. Could they have foreseen that, within a year after Garfield's inauguration, an assassin's bullet would strike the President down, and that, with the death of his chief, Arthur would succeed to the presidency, they would perhaps have pondered more deeply on the inscrutable ways of Providence. Shocked as the country was at the insane act of the assassin, a disappointed office seeker, it found in Chester A. Arthur a man who could rise magnificently to the great responsibility which had been thrust upon him in the hour of a national tragedy.

Back in New York again, DeWitt followed his army duties. For several years John Starin had been urging him to resign his commission and become an executive

in the Starin organization. It was finally agreed that DeWitt should take a leave of absence from the army and enter upon a position with the Starin Transportation Lines, to see if he would like civilian life well enough to leave the army and become permanently associated with his brother-in-law; but, just as was the case when he returned to business in Madison after the Civil War, DeWitt found that, for him, the attractions of army life were stronger than the temptations of a settled home and a larger monetary reward than he could ever hope to receive as an officer. He decided to remain in the army.

In April, 1882, there was a vacancy in the Army Pay Department, and President Arthur was requested to consider DeWitt for promotion to it. He was accordingly summoned to Washington. "Called with Senator Don Cameron on President Arthur. Recommended for appointment as Major and Paymaster, U.S.A.," was DeWitt's terse entry in his diary.

Though undoubtedly his relationship to John Starin had something to do with Arthur's remembering Captain Poole as a worthy candidate for promotion, DeWitt justly believed that his record as an army officer had been the deciding factor. He had always stood on his own feet, had never used political "pull," and would have been the last man in the army ever to count on the fact that he had a wealthy and influential brother-in-law.

His appointment was made by the President and con-

firmed by the Senate; John Starin went on his bond, and in due course orders arrived for him to proceed from New York City to Vancouver Barracks, on the Columbia River, in what was then the Territory of Washington. Late that summer Molly's father died, and she and the two children went to St. Louis for a visit with the widowed Mary Domett Pettes. DeWitt joined them in October, and the family then continued the transcontinental trip to San Francisco, where they embarked on the steamer "Oregon" for their new home in the West.

Looking back on their numerous visits with the Starins, DeWitt and Molly had many pleasant memories of the brilliant social life they had seen in New York and in Washington. Ever thoughtful of her relatives and her friends, Laura Starin was a gracious hostess and a devoted sister. At her social gatherings, DeWitt, with his fine military bearing, had been a man who attracted attention. A seasoned campaigner in the Indian wars, he was always asked by someone present to tell of his experiences. In those years the "untamed West" seemed to the effete East very far away. Molly, too, had her woman's experiences on the frontier to relate; and, to the Eastern women she met, she was something of a Joan of Arc of the Prairies.

But now they were three thousand miles from Washington, on the farthest frontier, and their life had become once more merged in that of an army post. Washington

would be vastly changed before they saw it again. Roscoe Conkling's machine would be broken and his power destroyed; Arthur would be refused the nomination for another term, which should have been given him on the record he had made; Blaine, in the convention of 1884, would receive the honor he had so often wanted, only to see it turn to ashes through his defeat by Grover Cleveland. Soon the old leaders would be passing from the scene, and a young Lochinvar would be riding out of the West, advocating "Free Silver," a financial doctrine strange to Eastern ears.

4

DeWitt and Molly had hoped for a station in the East but in this they were disappointed. It was good to be back with the army, and DeWitt enjoyed his work as Paymaster of the Department of the Columbia. General Nelson A. Miles, with whom he had served in the Yellowstone country during the Sioux War, was in command of the department, which included all the garrisons from Fort Klamath, in the Siskiyou Mountains near the California line, to the artillery stations on the shores of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. To the eastward were posts as far away as Boise Barracks in Idaho, and at each of them were officers and men who were ready every month to welcome the paymaster with his black leather bags filled with currency.

Routine monthly pay trips, by train, by ship, and by stagecoach, continued through the next few years without special incident. Miles was relieved from command of the department in 1885 and General John Gibbon took his place. Gibbon was as fine an officer as the old army had produced. He had been appointed from North Carolina to the United States Military Academy at West Point. Graduated in time to participate in the closing operations of Winfield Scott's successful campaign to capture the City of Mexico, he had served as a company officer in the Regular Army from the close of the Mexican War until the opening year of the Rebellion. In May, 1862, he was appointed a brigadier general in the Union army and took a very active and brilliant part in the struggle, being mustered out of the service, as a major general, shortly after the war. He was recommissioned as a colonel of infantry in the Regular Army in 1866 and for almost twenty years served on the frontier. In the summer of 1876, it will be remembered, General Gibbon had marched his troops from Fort Ellis, Montana, to the Yellowstone River to join Terry and Crook in the campaign against the hostile Sioux. His command rescued the survivors of the Seventh Cavalry and buried Custer and his dead. DeWitt and John Gibbon were close friends, and the reunion at Vancouver Barracks was a happy one.

Just at the time that DeWitt's heart was gladdened by

the arrival of the new department commander, sad news arrived from St. Louis, telling of the death of Molly's mother, Mary Domett Pettes. With both of her parents gone and her life so definitely established with the army, the old life of Boston and St. Louis faded rapidly into the dim past, and Molly clung even closer to the husband she adored and the children she loved. On October 28, 1885, their second son was born, and DeWitt and Molly named him DeWitt Clinton Poole. It was far away and long ago that Hudson and Harriet Poole had named their baby for the "father of the Erie Canal," but the names and loyalties of those earlier days were being carried into the Far West.

A few months later the new baby and his elder brother were baptized in the little Episcopal church of Vancouver, with General John Gibbon acting as godfather and Molly's sister, Helen Gordon Pettes, as godmother for both boys.

5

Four years were usually a maximum stay at a post in those army days, but it was not until August, 1887, five years after their arrival on the Columbia, that we find DeWitt and Molly, their three children, and "Aunt Nellie" packing their household goods for another move. DeWitt was preparing to proceed to Fort Sam Houston, down in the Lone Star State, to take up the

duties of Chief Paymaster of the Department of Texas for four pleasant years. There many old friendships were renewed, for General David S. Stanley was in command, and one of his staff officers was none other than Captain Oskaloosa Smith, who, as a lieutenant, had made the trip from Fort Randall to St. Louis with DeWitt in 1870, when he first met Molly Pettes.

The last four years in Texas passed quickly. DeWitt had long and dangerous "pay trips" to make to the posts along the Rio Grande and to others in the interior of the state, which were off the railroad and could be reached only by stagecoach. There were no banking facilities in those days for transferring funds and for shipping currency by express, so DeWitt, often with as much as fifty thousand dollars in his leather traveling bags, made his monthly trips, accompanied only by his clerk, and frequently covering hundreds of miles by stagecoach to reach the more isolated garrisons.

The back roads of Texas in the eighties were wild and dangerous routes over which to carry cash. The notorious "Billy the Kid" had been killed in 1881 by Sheriff Pat Garrett, of Lincoln County, across the line in New Mexico, but many a desperado like him was still living an outlawed life by his skill with a six-shooter, both in Texas and just across the border in Old Mexico. The railroad from San Antonio went south to Laredo on the Rio Grande, where DeWitt paid the troops at Fort

Ringgold; but, after leaving Ringgold, in order to reach Brownsville and the garrison at the mouth of the Rio Grande, a long, dangerous drive was necessary over roads that for more than a hundred miles were on the Mexican side; but good luck and good planning carried DeWitt through these dangers. He was never robbed; and when he closed his accounts with the Government after those last four years in Texas, it was found that the Treasurer of the United States owed DeWitt Clinton Poole two cents.

6

Ever since his experience at Whetstone Agency and his years of service in the Indian country of Dakota, DeWitt had continued to have a deep interest in the Sioux. During the last year that he was stationed at Fort Sam Houston, developments among all the tribes of northern Indians took a very serious turn as the result of the so-called "Messiah Craze," which started among the Paiute Indians of Nevada and spread east to the Sioux of Dakota.

DeWitt's old friend Spotted Tail was dead. He had gone to the Happy Hunting Ground ten years before, having been killed in 1881 by a rival Brule chief. The Brule Sioux, however, were living at and near the Rosebud Agency in South Dakota, while Red Cloud still held sway over his Oglalas at the near-by Pine Ridge Agency.

According to the believers of the "Craze," an Indian messiah who had been killed by the white men had come back to life and was now preparing to punish the Americans for their wickedness, especially for their injustices to the Indians. With the coming of spring in 1891, he and his Indian brothers would wipe the white man from the face of the earth, would then resurrect all the dead Indians, bring back the buffalo, and restore the supremacy of the red man.

"Ghost dances" were started at Pine Ridge, on the Rosebud reservation, and by Sitting Bull in his camp on Grand River, near the Missouri. Thousands of Indians were thrown into a religious fervor, and reports of a threatened new Sioux war spread through the country. In November, 1890, President Benjamin Harrison ordered the War Department to assume responsibility for preventing an outbreak, and General Nelson A. Miles was placed in command of the situation.

Sitting Bull seemed again to be the leader in stirring up hostility, under this religious guise; and in December, 1890, orders were sent to the Indian Police to visit his "hostile" camp and to arrest the old chief and medicine man. The Eighth Cavalry, stationed at Fort Yates, North Dakota, was ordered to support the Indian Police, and at midnight two troops left for Sitting Bull's camp, which was situated at a distance of forty-five miles to the south. In his report, Major James McLaughlin says:

The morning of the 15th of December, 1890, broke with the sky overcast and a light snow falling—a snow so fine that it scarcely covered the ground, and while it was falling thirty-nine regular Indian Policemen and four specials, under command of Bull Head and Shave Head, rode into Sitting Bull's camp. . . . The entrance of the policemen awakened the camp but they saw no one as Bull Head wheeled his men between the houses of Sitting Bull, and ordered them to dismount. Ten policemen, headed by Bull Head and Shave Head, entered one of the houses. . . . In this house they found the old medicine man, his two wives, and his son Crow Foot, a youth of seventeen years.

The women were very much frightened and began to cry. Sitting Bull sat up and asked what was the matter.

"You are under arrest and must go to the agency," said Bull Head.

"Very well," said Sitting Bull, "I will go with you . . ."

When all had been made ready, Bull Head graciously took the right arm of the chief, and Shave Head took the other, while Red Tomahawk walked directly behind, and thus they emerged from the cabin door and felt the cold air of the dawn upon their tough faces.

The camp had been aroused, and when the policemen appeared with the chief they found at least two hundred badly worked up "ghost-dancers," well armed and crowding and jostling each other around the entrance to the cabin. Crow Foot came out, and, upon seeing that his father really intended to give himself up, he shouted:

"You call yourself a brave man, and you have declared that you would never surrender to a blue coat, and now you give yourself up to Indians in blue uniforms."

This taunt from his son struck old Sitting Bull very hard, and, looking around and seeing the earnest faces of his people,

any one of whom would gladly have died for him, he suddenly screamed out an order to attack the police.

Bull Head and Shave Head both fell, riddled with bullets, but, as he fell, the former shot Sitting Bull through the side, and Red Tomahawk, from behind, shot the chief through the head, killing him instantly.*

In the fight which followed, six of the police were killed and the whole party was saved from annihilation only by the timely arrival of the troops of the Eighth Cavalry.

Sitting Bull and Spotted Tail were now both dead, Red Cloud was an old man; and Big Foot, who was leading one of the large bands of the hostile Sioux, was finally persuaded to order his people to return to the agencies. He did this, and his whole band moved from the Bad Lands to Wounded Knee Creek, about twenty miles from Pine Ridge Agency, where they camped.

The next morning, which was December 29, 1890, preparations were made to disarm the Indians of Big Foot's band, after which they were to be taken to one of the agencies or shipped south to the Indian Territory. The Indians had pitched their tepees on an open plain, a short distance from the creek, and there they were surrounded by the "bluecoats" of eight troops of the

*This account of the death of Sitting Bull and the Battle of Wounded Knee has been taken, in large part, from that excellent little book, *The Taming of the Sioux*, written and published by Frank Fiske, Bismarck, North Dakota, 1917.

Seventh Cavalry, one company of Indian Scouts, and a battery of Hotchkiss machine guns.

Two of the cavalry troops were dismounted and drawn up in line before the Indian tepees, the Hotchkiss guns were trained on the Indian camp, and then—as the climax of a situation which was growing momentarily more tense—the order was given for the Indians to deliver their arms.

Most of the warriors, wrapped in their blankets, came out and seated themselves in a row on the ground before the dismounted cavalrymen. They were then ordered to go, by themselves, back into their tepees and to bring out their firearms. Of the several hundred warriors, only about twenty complied with the order, and when they returned they had only two rifles with them. It was apparent that the Indians had no intention of really giving up their arms.

Something had to be done, so a detachment of soldiers was ordered to search the Indians and the tepees. While the troopers were searching for firearms, to the great disgust and provocation of the Indians, a medicine man named Yellow Bird was walking about among the warriors, blowing on his eagle-bone whistle, and telling them that they ought to fight for their rights. As he spoke in Sioux, the officers and men could not understand what he was saying and did not realize how dangerous the old fellow was, nor how great the tension

of overwrought nerves on both sides had then become.

As a soldier made an attempt to raise the blanket of one of the warriors, Yellow Bird picked up a handful of dust and threw it into the air. Immediately the young warrior drew his gun from under his blanket and fired, point-blank, into the line of standing troopers, who instantly replied by firing a volley into the line of seated warriors, while the battery of Hotchkiss machine guns opened fire with deadly effect. Almost half the band were killed or wounded by this first fire from the troops, but the survivors sprang to their feet, and for a few minutes there was a fierce hand-to-hand struggle. Most of the warriors had revolvers and knives under their blankets, and with these and their efficient war clubs they succeeded in keeping up the unequal struggle. More than sixty troopers were killed before Big Foot and almost his entire band—men, women, and children—had been annihilated.

Colonel James W. Forsythe had taken every precaution to guard against just such an affair, by separating the women and children from the warriors and by giving strict orders to his men that no woman or child should be hurt; but in the anger and excitement of the close melee the white soldiers got out of hand, and even poor old Big Foot, who was lying sick in his tepee, was killed.

This most unfortunate affair, called the Battle of Wounded Knee, was the last in the long list of bloody

encounters fought by the American Indian for what he considered the defense of his homeland.

Several of DeWitt's army friends were killed at Wounded Knee and in the subsequent fighting, and DeWitt keenly regretted their loss, but deep in his heart his sympathies were with the Sioux. He knew and appreciated the Indians' side of the long and losing struggle they had waged against the invading white man, ever since the first English settlers came to the coast of New England.

Fort Sam Houston was DeWitt's last army post. In May, 1891, he was transferred to Cincinnati, where he remained on duty as paymaster for the posts in Ohio and Kentucky during the last year of his active service. By requirement of law, on his sixty-fourth birthday, September 28, 1892, he was placed on the retired list of the United States Army.

Chapter XIX

OVER THE SEVEN SEAS

I

THE usual life of a retired army officer did not suit DeWitt. In Washington, where he and Molly had gone to make their home, the "retired crowd," as he called the older officers, were living the old days over again—a sad, unnatural living in the past that was made more depressing by the frequent military funerals which army men were expected to attend, and at which they were often asked to serve as pallbearers. Although DeWitt was in his sixties, he had the energy and the forward-looking mental attitude of a man of fifty; but the law is inflexible, and at the age of sixty-four an officer must retire from active service, no matter how excellent may be his health and capabilities.

After three years of sedentary life in Washington, he had worked himself into a nervous breakdown, and an army doctor whom he consulted prescribed a complete separation from family and friends—to be obtained by an ocean voyage and a brief sojourn abroad. Molly decided to remain in Washington with the children during her husband's absence, and DeWitt, worried by the thought of leaving his family, and feeling

quite sorry for himself, was bundled off to New York, where his sister Laura and the young people of her family put him aboard the old "Manitoba" of the Atlantic Transport Line, bound for London.

Arriving there shortly after New Year's Day, 1896, he established himself in lodgings in Upper Bedford Place, whence he started out to see the sights of London and to call on friends at the American Embassy and in the West End. One of the latter was Mrs. George Fox, widow of the late London partner of A. T. Stewart, the merchant prince of New York. DeWitt had first met her thirty years before, when he was stationed in Atlanta on Reconstruction duty under General Oliver O. Howard, and she was there with her first husband, who was an army officer. Left a young widow, she married Fox and had been residing abroad for many years. After his death she remained in London, living in considerable style, with her two charming daughters, in fashionable Cavendish Square.

Under the double influence of the sea voyage and the three weeks spent as a guest of these vivacious London friends, DeWitt's nervous breakdown became a thing of the past; and, after a trip on the Continent, which included visits to Paris, Berlin, Milan, Florence, and Rome, he sailed for home from Naples one beautiful spring day, completely restored in health and thoroughly initiated as an over-sea traveler.

In June, when DeWitt and Molly closed their Washington house, they definitely decided that the home in the capital would not be opened again. With their summer cottage on Lake Mendota, near Madison, as a *pied-à-terre*, they would travel during the winter months, to Florida, to California, or to the far places of the world. Little did DeWitt realize, as they were making this decision, that Molly, who was more than twenty years his junior, and for whose future security he was always planning, was soon to be taken from him.

Away from the funereal atmosphere of the Army and Navy Club, where aging officers in varying degrees of decrepitude gathered daily, DeWitt's old spirit and vigor returned, and he took an even more lively interest in current political affairs than during the years of his active military life. With Molly and the children he spent the summer of 1896 in his cottage at Maple Bluff, "under my own vine and fig tree," as he liked to call it. After a busy morning spent at odd jobs about the place, or, perhaps, at a round of golf on a new course that had been made in an old cow pasture on "The Bluff," he would settle down to his newspapers and magazines. Although he was a Republican in politics, his was no narrow partisanship, and in addition to the local newspapers—the *Wisconsin State Journal* and the opposition sheet—he sometimes read the editorials in the *New York World*, and always those of his favorite *New York*

Times, in an effort to get all points of view. Occasionally his friends in England sent him the *London Times*, and this kept him informed on important events in Europe.

He was against "Free Silver" and was opposed to "Bryanism" in all its forms, although, unlike some of his friends, he did not indulge in a towering rage whenever the name of William Jennings Bryan was mentioned during the spirited campaign of 1896. DeWitt was, "first, last, and all the time," a "sound money" man; for he had been in business during the hard times of 1857, had seen the panic of 1873 usher in a period of prolonged business depression, and knew the disastrous effects of an unsound currency. The election of William McKinley pleased him immensely.

The campaign had been fought on the gold-standard issue, and Bryan's 16-to-1 had been "knocked into a cocked hat." The "Gold Democrats," supported tacitly by Grover Cleveland's denunciation of bimetallism, had made the verdict at the polls emphatic, and the country was assured of a soundly conservative administration. After the election DeWitt and Molly decided to return to Washington for another season before beginning their more extended winter journeyings. They were seated in one of the grandstands, on that stormy March 4, 1897, when President McKinley drove up Pennsylvania Avenue at the head of the inaugural parade after he and the now almost forgotten Vice President Garrett

A. Hobart had taken their oaths of office at the Capitol.

2

In the autumn of that same year, fate struck DeWitt a cruel and unexpected blow. He and Molly had spent the summer happily at Maple Bluff, and had moved into Madison in September, preparatory to starting for St. Augustine, Florida, with their household gods, to set up a new winter home in the "sunny South." Their departure was delayed by a smallpox epidemic in one of the Southern states, and the establishment of a "shot-gun quarantine," which stopped the movement of passenger trains into Florida. The delay dragged on through October, and by the middle of November, Molly, who had never experienced a day's illness in her life, fell sick. For three successive days DeWitt's diary entries show the rapid approach of the tragic end:

"Nov. 14th. Molly no better. Dr. Head, in attendance, pronounces trouble acute pleurisy." "Nov. 15th. Molly much worse—pneumonia." And then, on the next day: "Molly died peacefully at 5 o.c. p.m."

The funeral service was held in Grace Episcopal Church, and DeWitt and the children, with many relatives and friends of the family, made the sad trip to Forest Hill Cemetery for the interment. At DeWitt's request, all arrangements for the funeral were of the utmost simplicity; for, in his overwhelming grief, his

mind found solace in turning back, with a sort of affectionate and admiring sympathy, to Spotted Tail and to the day of that Indian chief's bereavement. "Old Spot" had given away his most prized possessions when his wife died, and had clothed himself in one poor, threadbare blanket, as mute testimony of his unspeakable sorrow, and as evidence of his humility before the will of the Great Spirit. The skies were overcast and a cold wind was blowing as DeWitt stood beside the open grave. What was there to live for, now that his lovely Molly had gone? Disconsolate, he and his children turned homeward as the earth closed over her.

3

He went to Florida that winter, but his heart was in Madison. Louie and young DeWitt were with him, and John and Laura Starin went South to bring him what comfort they could to assuage the sorrow of that sad, hard year. In March he "forwarded orange blossoms to Mother, to commemorate her birthday, March 31, ninety years old." In the spring he visited West Point to see his elder son, who was a cadet in the United States Military Academy, and on April 21 he entered in his diary: "Visited Hudson and saw the Corps of Cadets at evening parade. War between Spain and the United States declared today."

From West Point, DeWitt went to Washington, and

at Falls Church, Virginia, visited his old friend General George W. Davis, commander of the training camp for volunteers enlisted for the war. There he saw thousands of young Americans, many of them sons of Union and Confederate veterans, being uniformed, armed, and drilled for the American expedition to Cuba.

For the next three years he passed the fall and winter months in Europe, and was in Brussels, in February, 1901, when the class of which his elder son was a member was graduated from the Military Academy in advance of the usual date, to fill vacancies in the list of officers of the Regular Army, that had been enlarged after the war with Spain. That fall his daughter Helen Louise and Doctor Francis Favill Bowman, of Madison, were married and a large group of relatives and friends, who had attended the wedding in Grace Church, gathered at a reception held at Maple Bluff in the afternoon of the wedding day. Louie wore the same white-satin wedding gown that her great-grandmother, Harriet Fracker, wore when she and George Washington Domett were married in Boston on a Sunday morning in 1810.

For another three years DeWitt packed his trunk and his bags each autumn for a trip either to Europe or to California; but New Year's Day, 1904, found him sailing westward for the first time—out through the Golden Gate from San Francisco, to see the Orient and to get firsthand impressions of the sleeping giant of the East.

In 1903, the growing tension between Russia and Japan, especially in Manchuria, had presaged a possible war, but as DeWitt was sailing across the pleasant reaches of the Pacific no real apprehension of open conflict between the two countries existed. Having spent five winter seasons in Europe since his retirement, DeWitt was eager to obtain some close-up views of the situation in Asia. The lure of the East had a fascination for him, but the deciding factor in his going was to renew his contact with army life and to see his son Hudson, now a first lieutenant in the Army Corps of Engineers, stationed at Manila.

Twenty-six days after sailing from San Francisco, the old army transport "Thomas" with DeWitt on board steamed past the island of Corregidor, into Manila Bay and up to her anchorage inside the breakwater of Manila harbor, whence DeWitt was taken ashore by the Division Headquarters launch. Two days after his arrival, he left Manila on a trip into the remote northern province of Benguet, accompanying Hudson, who, with Judge Rosario of the Philippine Court of Land Registration, a clerk, and an interpreter, had been assigned the task of clearing up the titles to certain lands which the United States Government was acquiring, as the site for its projected summer capital at Baguio. Although the rather

difficult journey required, at one stage, a horseback ride of two days' duration, with an overnight bivouac in the mountains, DeWitt was the life of the party—and this despite his seventy-six years and his recent long voyage.

William Howard Taft was at that time the Governor General of the Philippines, and among his many outstanding characteristics were, then as always, his great weight (he tipped the scales at close to three hundred pounds), his jovial nature, and his wonderful sense of humor. Mr. Taft had gone for the first time to Baguio a few months before DeWitt made the same trip, and was delighted with the cool breezes and the health-giving highland climate of the mountain province. He was also very proud of the horseback ride he had successfully accomplished. When, at long last, he was comfortably seated in a camp chair on the porch of a little cottage at Baguio, his enthusiasm knew no bounds, and, summoning his secretary, he dispatched the following cablegram to Elihu Root, then Secretary of War:

Secwar,

April 15, 1903.

Washington.

Stood trip well, rode horseback 25 miles to 5000 feet altitude. Great province this, only 150 miles from Manila with air bracing as Adirondacks or Murray Bay.* Only pines and grasslands. Temperature this hottest month in the Philippines in my cottage porch at three in the afternoon 68. Fires are necessary night and morning.

Taft.

*Murray Bay, Canada, was for many years Taft's summer home.

As quickly as the wires could carry it, he received the following reply:

Washington, D. C., April 16, 1903.

Taft,

Manila.

Referring to telegram from your office of 15th inst., how is horse?

Root.†

When he had read it, his shouts of laughter, rolling over the hills of Baguio, could have been heard half a mile away.

DeWitt visited all parts of the archipelago, going as far south as Jolo, where the Sultan of Sulu still ruled his Mohammedan Moros, and then to Zainboanga, where that fine soldier and firm but kindly administrator, Brigadier General Leonard Wood, was in command. Wood and his two aides-de-camp, Captain Hal Dorey and Lieutenant Frank McCoy, showed Colonel Poole many courtesies, arranging for him a trip to Lake Lanao, in the high mountain fastnesses of the island of Mindanao, and in many other ways helping to make his visit enjoyable.

From Manila, the longest way around the world was not the shortest way home, but it was the most interesting route for DeWitt to take; and he was as excited

†*The Philippines Past and Present*, by Dean C. Worcester [Member of the Philippine Commission, 1900-1913]. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1914.

as a schoolboy when the commanding general issued orders for his transportation from Manila to New York on the army transport "Kilpatrick." On this ship he made the homeward voyage by way of the Red Sea and the Suez Canal route, touching at Singapore and many other colorful ports of call in India, and then on through the Mediterranean and across the Atlantic.

In October of the same year he was off again on the high seas, this time taking his younger son with him for a brief sojourn in Europe. By the following February, he was back in Madison and confiding in his faithful diary: "Visited my cottage at Maple Bluff today with Frank Bowman in his cutter. Tipped over in the snow three times."

5

Ever since the close of the Russo-Japanese War, DeWitt had been greatly intrigued by a plan to visit the land of the Czars; and so, in the early winter of 1906, he set out once more for Europe, this time heading for St. Petersburg by way of Berlin. He was in the German capital during the holiday season that year, having prolonged his visit to attend a Christmas Eve dinner given by the American Ambassador, Charlemagne Tower. Tower was a wealthy man, and, according to DeWitt, his official dinners and social affairs were conducted in formal and lavish style. DeWitt took a one-horse cab

from his hotel, on the appointed evening, and, upon reaching the heavily-grilled front door of the Tower home, paid and dismissed the driver. As he mounted the steps, the double doors of the mansion were swung slowly open by two lackeys wearing powdered wigs and elaborate livery, with knee breeches, white stockings, and pumps. As he entered, a *valet de chambre* took his hat and coat, while an elegantly bespangled majordomo, with a friendly but slightly condescending smile, waved him toward the grand staircase.

Now, DeWitt liked to see any function carried off with efficiency and in a style befitting one's purse, but he detested any form of ostentation, and he objected to uniforms, unless they were appropriate to the wearer and the occasion. Imagine DeWitt's astonishment as he ascended the wide stone stairway and passed on the second landing, halfway to the main floor, another uniformed majordomo, more generously bedecked and beribboned than the one below! Something in DeWitt's democratic soul rose up against such pomp and ceremony at an entertainment which he felt should have been more truly American. As he entered the reception salon, he joined a large group, in full evening dress, to whom lackeys were distributing place cards from silver trays.

The dining room was a thing of beauty, but to DeWitt, in his critical state of mind, it could never be a

joy forever. It was an immense hall, with what seemed to him an interminably long table down the center, brilliantly lighted by sparkling crystal pendants that threw back myriad reflections of the lights in four huge chandeliers.

With his most courtly manner and his usual smile, DeWitt gave his arm to his dinner partner and escorted her to the place beside him, but underneath his debonair exterior his simple democratic nature was churning at the boiling point.

At his place he found an ornate and beautifully folded napkin, which he opened with a yank and a snap that were prompted by his feelings of definite disapproval. His companion caught herself just in time to stifle a loud "Oh!" as the napkin straightened out and a roll, which had been deftly hidden in its folds, flew into the air, described a high parabolic trajectory, and, to the horror of a majordomo and several footmen, landed in the lap of a stout and bejeweled dowager across the table.

The incident caused a much-needed relaxation as DeWitt simulated a look of surprise at what he had done. For him it was good, plain American comic relief from the artificial and overdone elegance of the entertainment.

The visit to Russia passed without much to interest him, save the crude living conditions that prevailed, the general poverty of the country, and the air of repression that pervaded conversation whenever he tried to get

people to express their opinions. In April he sailed for home, and in May was back again, under his own vine and fig tree.

6

During the next three years his winter trips included tours of South America, Puerto Rico, and Cuba; a Mediterranean cruise that led him through Algiers, Malta, the Holy Land, and Egypt; and another stay in Italy, where he spent most of his time in Florence, Rome, and Naples.

On New Year's Day, 1910, he was in California, and, with other winter guests from the East, stood on the south portico of the old Green Hotel in Pasadena to see what was then called the "Flower Show Parade." Ten days later he attended an aviation meet at Dominguez Field, near Los Angeles, to witness the first exhibition of airplane flying ever given in California. His diary records: "Attended aviation display near Los Angeles. Paulhan made fine exhibition in flight. In auto with Billy Boeing and Hudson."

The air meet at Dominguez Field that year gave many persons their first opportunity to see airplanes in flight, and this was true of DeWitt Clinton Poole and William Edward Boeing, Hudson Poole's brother-in-law, who in 1913 became one of our earliest American pilots and, eventually, a pioneer manufacturer of aircraft and oper-

ator of passenger and air mail 'planes. Several types of aircraft were on the field that day, and most of them remained on the ground, for only a few of the aviators were able to get their 'planes into the air and accomplish actual flight. One of these was Glenn Curtiss, and another was Louis Paulhan. Curtiss had a light, flimsy-looking "crate" which he had designed and built, while the Frenchman flew a large, well-constructed Farman biplane which he had shipped across the Atlantic for exhibition flights in America, and with which he was soon to win fame in Europe.* Curtiss made several short hops around the field, not rising at any point more than five hundred feet above the ground. Paulhan's was by far the more impressive exhibition. His big Farman biplane rose easily from the ground at every attempt, and he flew several miles each time he took off, circling to a height of four thousand feet, thereby achieving a new world altitude record, handling the big ship with precision, and receiving thunderous applause from the spectators. DeWitt was much impressed, and so was "Bill" Boeing, who, though greatly interested, little dreamed of the part he would one day take in aviation history.

"Billy," said DeWitt, "I've been thinking about those two contraptions, especially that one the Frenchman is

*On April 27-28, 1910, Paulhan successfully flew from London to Manchester, one hundred and seventy miles, with only one stop within 24 hours, for the *Daily Mail's* £10,000 prize. See *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Eleventh Edition, X, 519.

flying. If we had only had one of those blasted things with us in 1861, after we crossed the Potomac into Virginia, old Joe Johnston would never have given us the slip to get into the Battle of Bull Run, the way he did."

"You're right, Colonel," said Boeing. "They'll be useful some day in war, and we should have an airplane factory right here on the Pacific Coast, to build 'planes for both the army and the navy."

7

The Panama Canal was nearing completion in the spring of 1911, under the engineering skill of Brigadier General George W. Goethals and his army-engineer assistants, Colonels Harry Hodges, James Gaillard, and Chester Harding. The great locks and the huge gates were being finished; the enormous excavation at Culebra Cut had been made; and the hydraulic valves and operating machinery were receiving the final touches, preparatory to another "grand opening." DeWitt visited the project during this last phase of the construction and spent some weeks inspecting every detail during his stay as the guest of the engineer officers in their mosquito-proof quarters near Gatun in the Canal Zone.

In October he was back in Berlin, to stay until early in the spring with young DeWitt, who was establishing himself there as a junior officer in the Consular Service. A letter from California lured him away, however, and

January of 1912 found him again at sea, bound this time for New York and Coronado Beach. He sailed from Bremen on the old "Prinz Friedrich Wilhelm," and when he reached Coronado early in February, had traveled more than seven thousand miles for a short visit on the California coast.

On April 11 he received a cable announcing that DeWitt, junior, had been appointed vice consul general in Berlin, and his diary entry for that same day adds: "Titanic sunk today off Cape Race lightship. Calls for help sent from ship by wireless telegraphy." *

September found him back again in Germany, to be with his son and, later, to travel leisurely on the Continent, as far south as Rome. While he was in the Eternal City a cable arrived from Madison bearing the message: "Boy, all well." This was the announcement of the birth of his second grandson, John Poole Bowman.

In April, 1913, DeWitt sailed again from Naples, this time by way of Palermo, Sicily, for New York, where he remained for a few days, rather unhappily, at the Hotel Ritz. His attitude toward the well-known hostelry in Madison Avenue was expressed succinctly in the diary entry: "Dinner at Ritz. Full dress dining room. Very little to eat. Cost, \$8.00."

*The Titanic disaster dramatically brought radio to public attention when David Sarnoff, then a young operator at Wanamaker station in New York City, informed the press of the ship's sinking, kept up a steady stream of bulletins on the rescue work, and finally furnished a list of survivors.

In May he was back in Madison, driving his electric automobile about town and out to "The Bluff," getting his "vine and fig tree" ready for another summer, and betimes calling on the Bowmans and old friends. He had made his last trip overseas, for the greatest war in history was brewing, and young DeWitt's reports from Berlin during the autumn of 1913 were to the effect that persons having no urgent business in Europe had better remain at home.

In a newly rented apartment on Johnson Street, DeWitt established himself, with a faithful housekeeper, resigned to hibernate in Madison for the coming winter. It was to be the winter of Europe's discontent—a discontent fraught with frightful consequences for the world.

Chapter XX

THE WORLD WAR

I

DURING the fateful summer of 1914, DeWitt followed events in Europe with more than his accustomed interest in world affairs. Two reasons for the eagerness with which he read the foreign dispatches in the newspapers were that his younger son and namesake was in the foreign service in Paris, and that Europe indubitably was heading toward war.

Two weeks before Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir presumptive to the Austrian and Hungarian thrones, and his wife were assassinated in the little Bosnian town of Sarajevo, DeWitt Clinton Poole, Jr., had been transferred to Paris from the American Consulate in Berlin, where he had served for two years. Soon after the transfer, in a letter to his father, the young vice consul wrote that he had obtained a leave of absence and was sailing for home on the S. S. "St. Louis," due to arrive in New York on July 23. Before the month was out, he was in Madison, but even before his arrival there, the plan for a quiet sojourn with his father in the Land of the Four Lakes had perforce been altered because of Austria's ultimatum to Serbia. On August 2 Germany declared

war against the Triple Entente and invaded Belgium, breaking a treaty which for nearly a hundred years had guaranteed the neutrality of that country. As, one after another, the nations of Europe were plunging headlong into the conflict, DeWitt, junior, received orders from the Department of State to return to his consular duties in Paris. He sailed from Boston on the U. S. S. "North Carolina," under sealed orders, to be opened when three miles at sea.

For five weeks the aging father was without word as to his son's whereabouts, and could only guess whether his boy had returned to France or had been sent to another post. On September 14 he finally received a telegram from Secretary of State Bryan, reporting that the young man was back in the American Consulate at Paris. As he read the newspapers in those early days of the war, the veteran of the Indian campaigns wondered how long it would be before what he called "the arrogance of the Potsdam gang" would force the United States into the conflict on the side of the Allies.

DeWitt's thoughts went back more than fourteen years to a day early in 1900, when Kaiser Wilhelm, addressing troops he was sending to the scene of the Boxer uprising in China, had admonished them "to give no quarter and to conduct yourselves so like Huns that for a thousand years no Chinaman will dare look askance at a German." It was a sinister omen, DeWitt said at the

time, of what could be expected when the ruthless German war machine went into action on the continent of Europe. He had visited in Germany often enough to see what its military goose-stepping was doing to the character of the people.

With Europe aflame and in a death struggle for the survival of democracy, DeWitt felt that it would be only a matter of time before the domineering conceit of the Kaiser and his war lords would overreach itself; that the United States would not have long to wait for the inevitable decision, however much her statesmen might honestly try to keep the country out of the struggle; and that the idealism of a Wilson, or of any other American President, when set over against the philosophy of power politics and intrigue, would always be unavailing to "keep us out of war" when the crucial hour came.

2

As a student of civil as well as military history, DeWitt knew that the shots fired in Sarajevo furnished only the excuse for war. The killing of an archduke was in itself but an incident in a long train of events that had their beginning in 1815, when the Congress of Vienna flouted and repudiated the principles of democracy. The Machiavellian hand of Prince Metternich, a chancellor of Austria who had been in his grave for more than fifty

years, was casting its dark shadow across Europe; and, ironically, England, which had given the old dictator asylum after his cruel régime was overthrown by the Austrian revolution of 1848, was now facing a situation which Metternich had helped to create.

DeWitt's thoughts went back also to his many pleasant sojourns in Paris. Whenever he had walked in the Place de la Concorde, he had always stopped and raised his hat before the black-draped statue of Strasbourg, which he knew served to remind Frenchmen of the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. The spirit of bullying nationalism had been infecting all Europe long before the turn of the century, as DeWitt had detected during his first visits to England and the Continent. Commercial and economic rivalries, he then reported, were contributing their share to international suspicions—to say nothing of the diplomatic rivalries that were rampant in the capitals of the Balkan States.

When General Bernhardi's book, *Germany and the Next War*, was published, DeWitt procured a copy of it and was so amazed by what the retired German cavalry officer wrote that he flung the volume down in disgust, though not in the least minimizing the dangers of such doctrines. Bernhardi's panegyric on war as needful for the "survival of the fittest" and as a means of spreading *Kultur* was unquestionably dangerous, but perhaps not more disingenuous than Homer Lea's *Day of*

the Saxon, in which the Englishman sought to prove that Great Britain's national superiority qualified John Bull to be pre-eminently the arbiter when decisions concerning civilization were to be made. As DeWitt viewed the matter, he felt that the British had not always come into the court of public opinion with clean hands.

The truth is that there was a touch of asperity in his comment on what he called Britain's superiority complex. Although he had always taken a liberal attitude toward the South since the close of the Civil War, and had been a firm advocate of the need of sincere reconciliation and reunion, he always found it hard to forget the attitude taken by Britain's ruling class in favoring the Confederacy during the Civil War, and in supplying vessels with which the South harried Northern commerce and destroyed Union ships, causing immense damage to American interests. The fact that after the war England paid roundly for the folly of her industrialists, in aiding secession in America, did not tend to lessen the resentment which all Union men felt toward the mother country. While DeWitt was never disposed to press the point, his family knew how he felt, and he himself never really tried to conceal the resentment still lurking in his breast.

"Don't you think you are a bit prejudiced against England?" one of his sons might ask.

"My dear boy," he would answer, "it is not a question

of prejudice; it is merely a willingness to face the facts of history." And in this he spoke for most of his contemporaries.

In 1898, soon after Admiral George Dewey's victory at Manila, there occurred an incident that did much to soften America's attitude toward Britain, which had been so dangerously strained during and shortly after the Civil War. The truculent Rear Admiral Von Diederichs had moved five of his German warships into Manila harbor without showing the commander of America's blockading squadron the deference due under the rules of international law, and the German appeared to Dewey to be maneuvering to give aid to the Spanish forces. Thereupon Admiral Chichester, commander of the British warships in Manila Bay, moved his cruisers nearer the Americans, held a conference with Dewey, and intimated that he could count fully on British support if Von Diederichs made an overt move. DeWitt joined in applauding Chichester's gallant act but insisted that it was England's democratic, not her Tory spirit that dictated the implied promise of co-operation.

When the Russo-Japanese War broke out in 1904, DeWitt favored the Russians. "There was a time when England's high and mighty wanted to throw their support to Jeff Davis," he said, "and America ought not to forget that Russia sent a fleet into New York harbor in 1863 and stood ready to abort the plan. Anyhow," he

always insisted, "Russians are white men, and those who are now shouting for a Japanese victory may rue the day on which they gave their moral support to the little brown men and hoped for the defeat of Russia. Let those who want to see Russia beaten say that the czaristic system is cruel, but it is not a bit more dangerous than the military caste which sets itself above the civil government of Japan. Just as sure as there is a tomorrow, the day will come when the democracies of the world will find this insolent clique in Japan a world trouble-maker." He did not live to see how prophetic were his words.

3

As the first three years of the World War dragged on, DeWitt followed every move of the opposing armies. An inveterate diner-out, his high spirits, his almost youthful enthusiasm, his fun making, and his humor made him a companion who was welcomed by old and young alike. He showed few of the signs of old age as the years advanced. When he was eighty-five his mind had lost little of its elasticity, and he was as vigorous mentally as he had been at sixty.

His diary jottings in those years were, as they had always been, brief and to the point. "Cable from DeWitt. Hudson over to see me from Detroit." "Louie back from Chicago after seeing Hudson and Caroline off to Cali-

foria. . . . Germany commenced blockade of England and Ireland with submarines today."

In April, 1915, as he was approaching his eighty-seventh birthday, he recorded: "Cold morning. Bryan resigns as Secretary of State. Out about town in my electric all afternoon." The assurance with which he drove his automobile through the crowded downtown streets of Madison, or wherever he wanted to go, was often a subject for admiring comment among his friends.

He spent the summer of 1915 at his country place on Lake Mendota, not far from the home of Robert M. La Follette, Wisconsin's noted liberal senator, and one day that August he gave a picnic there for a large group of his friends and neighbors. On September 28, his eighty-seventh birthday, he wrote in his diary: "Telegram from Hud and Caroline, congratulating me. . . . DeWitt coming from Paris latter part of this month or early in Oct." A few weeks later he wrote: "DeWitt sailed from Marseilles on S. S. 'Santa Ana' . . . Letter from Hud, waiting in New York for arrival of DeWitt."

The boys went on to Madison together and found their father in high fettle and more convinced than ever that Germany's campaign of frightfulness would bring the United States into the war. The visits of his sons were all too brief in these later years of his life, but DeWitt was so active himself that when they were unable to go to him he would plan to join one of them

whenever possible. On Christmas Day and on New Year's Eve he usually entertained Louie and Frank and their two boys, Francis and Poole Bowman. About the middle of January it was his custom to go to Florida for three or four months, and he kept a careful record of his comings and goings. He gave a family dinner on the evening the year 1916 was vanishing, and on January 20 of the new year he left Madison for St. Augustine.

"Baby born this morning. All well," read a telegram from Detroit which greeted him at his breakfast table in the dining room of The Barcelona, on a morning in February. The new arrival was a boy, DeWitt's third grandson; and he was delighted when, a few days later, he received a letter saying that Hudson and Caroline had named their child John Hudson Poole. One hundred and fifty years had passed since Ruth Hudson Poole, in Dighton, Massachusetts, gave the same name to a child who was to become this boy's great-great-grandfather.

4

On the international scene, events were moving swiftly. The day DeWitt was notified of the birth of another grandson, he was avidly keeping in touch with the latest news. On that day the German Ambassador in Washington, Count Von Bernstorff, was handed his passports, and diplomatic relations between Germany and the

United States were severed. This action was prophetic of what was to come. To DeWitt, as to others who had been following closely the conduct of the war in Europe, all signs pointed to an even more momentous decision on the part of the authorities in Washington. Through that month of February one of the chief topics of conversation was the sinking of neutral ships by German submarines. Within a period of four weeks, four hundred vessels, three-fourths of which were neutral, had been sunk; and to cap the climax, as the month was drawing to its close, the British Intelligence Service made public a document in which the German Imperial Government had ordered its minister in Mexico City to foment an attack against the United States in the event that this country entered the war against Germany. As an inducement, the Kaiser offered to Mexico some of our Southwestern states as its share of the loot. Such a highhanded but stupid act by the Kaiser and his war lords caused a wave of indignation to sweep the United States. It was, however, about what DeWitt had been expecting, so certain was he that the arrogance of the German imperialists would lead them eventually to some such *faux pas*, in their scheme to conquer the world.

As a rule, DeWitt remained in Florida each year until the first of May, and sometimes until later, but in that last year of his life the coming of spring called him back to Madison earlier than usual. He was on his way home

when President Wilson, addressing a special joint session of Congress, asked for a declaration that a state of war existed between Germany and the United States. DeWitt reached Madison on April 5, and on the following day the President signed the declaration. It was the third war with a foreign power upon which his country had entered during DeWitt's lifetime—the Mexican War, the Spanish-American War, and now the most titanic struggle of all: a war which was to engulf the world. What America's part would be, no one could foretell; but partisan politics was adjourned as the nation girded for the conflict. As DeWitt read and re-read the President's address, he felt more and more that he heard the voice of America speaking:

The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundation of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall make. . . .

It is a fearful thing to lead this great and peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest in our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their government, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations.

DeWitt recalled an April morning fifty-six years before, almost to the day, when another American President issued a call for volunteers. In that far-off April DeWitt was in the vigor of young manhood. He was still vigorous after all these years; but now, for the first time, it was borne in upon his consciousness that he was really old, and that his years were far spent. What would he give to be young again—young enough to be still counted in the ranks of men answering their country's call to service!

He reflected that for a second time the North and the South were closing ranks as comrades in a common cause. In 1898 the sons of the Blue and the Gray bore arms together; and now the grandsons were united in defense of their common heritage, and were to give an account of themselves on foreign soil. There was now no North or South but only one great country—one and indivisible.

5

The closing months of his life are now passing swiftly, but he is faithful in making his diary entries each day:

May 12. "150 students of U. W. [University of Wisconsin] leave for Fort Sheridan training camp, escorted by crowd of people of the town from campus to East Madison Depot."

May 27. "Telegram from Hudson . . . on duty in Detroit organizing new Engineer regiment for duty in France."



THE VOLUNTEER OF '61 READS A LETTER FROM
"SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE," 1917

July 18. "Clear and warm. Hudson wires he is with 16th Rgt. of Engineers. Off end of week for France . . . DeWitt writes he has been assigned to duty Moscow, Russia, going via Scandinavia. Over to Bowmans for lunch." And on the next day: "Fair and warmer. DeWitt goes to Moscow via Vancouver, B.C. and Trans-Siberian Ry. At movies, very good. Mary Pickford in 'Little American'."

August 16. "Received cable from DeWitt in Japan: 'Safe on first'."

September 26. "Letter from State Dept. stating DeWitt arrived Moscow, Sept. 10, inst. Wrote Sect'y Lansing thanking him for same."

October 1. "Frank Bowman received notice of appointment as Captain, Medical Reserve Corps, U. S. Army.

"Purchased from 1st Nat'l Bank of Madison, 2nd Liberty Loan Bonds. Paid cash."

October 20. "Louie called. Letter from DeWitt, Omsk Russia dated Sept. 5, 1917. Louie had letter from Hudson Oct. 1, 1917, somewhere in France."

As he enters the last month of his life, his interest in world events is undiminished and his plans for the future are made as usual.

November 3. "Clear sky, colder. Wisconsin-Minnesota football game today. Wisc 10 - Minn. 7. Tammany candidate for Mayor of New York elected.

"German-Austrian victory over Italians. 120,000 prisoners & 1000 guns captured.

"Snow covers ground. Two tons of coal from Conklin's."

November 15. "Wrote A. N. Blair about rooms in the Barcelona, St. Augustine, Fla. Ordered new batteries for my electric auto."

November 22. "Overcast and cold. Letter from DeWitt, Mos-

cow, Sept. 11-'17. Seventy-two days coming. N.Y. Times reports Bolsheviks leading revolution. Scenes of French Revolution being re-enacted in Moscow."

November 28. "No change in weather. Wrote letter to DeWitt, Moscow, Russia."

Two days later, when Louie stopped for a call at the apartment in Johnson Street, she found her father working at his desk. Newspapers covered the floor of the front bay window.

"Good morning, father. Why do you keep at those old accounts? It's cold again today, but it's clear. Wouldn't you like to go out for a short drive in my car?"

"I'm going to make this blasted bank statement balance with my check book if it takes from now till Kingdom Come. . . . Louie, I feel tired and out of sorts this morning."

"Just what I thought. Go to your room now and lie down for a while. I'll do some telephoning."

"No news from Hud or DeWitt. They're all right. Poole luck will carry them through. Call me in half an hour."

When Louie opened the door, shortly before noon, she spoke to her father, but there was no response. He seemed to be sleeping peacefully, but she knew he would not wake. The brave heart that had been beating for so many years had stopped to rest.

Taps had sounded.

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